DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 467 676 EA 031 833

AUTHOR	Woods, Deanna
TITLE	Moving Forward...From Where You Are to School Improvement That Lasts: A Research-Based Guide.
INSTITUTION	Northwest Regional Educational Lab., Portland, OR. School Improvement Program.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	2002-02-00
NOTE	163p.
CONTRACT	ED-01-CO-0013
AVAILABLE FROM	Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 101 S.W. Main St., Suite 500 (One Main Place Building, 5th Floor) Portland, OR 97204 ($19.25). Tel: 503-275-9500; Fax: 503-275-0458; Web site: http://www.nwrel.org/.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Information Analyses (070)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Educational Change; *Educational Improvement; Elementary Secondary Education; Guidelines; *Partnerships in Education

ABSTRACT

This guide is designed for anyone who wants to work together with others to improve schools. Its aim is to create a high performing learning community that is able to meet the highest goals for every student in its care. It identifies the "bottom line" of school-improvement efforts, that is, which elements research, best practice, and theory indicate are most important. In the research provided, school staffs and other stakeholders can find solid information that they can use to build a knowledge base that represents the very best that is known about school improvement, school-change processes, teaching and learning, and the cultures in which they occur. Contents are divided into topics that appear routinely in research and other school-improvement literature. The guide concludes with a series of "toolboxes" that can assist in establishing roles and relationships between school and district staffs and the larger community; enabling shared decision-making; developing focus and building coherency for a school-improvement plan; finding time for adult learning, planning, and collaborative work; supporting professional learning communities; and promoting and fostering leadership. (Contains 102 references.) (RT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

Moving Forward

ED 467 676

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. WILSON

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

EA 031 833

. . . from where you are to school improvement that lasts

A research-based guide

Creating Communities of Learning & Excellence

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Creating Communities of Learning & Excellence

This research synthesis is part of a series from NWREL to assist in school improvement. Publications are available in five areas:

Reengineering
Assists schools, districts, and communities in reshaping rules, roles, structures, and relationships to build capacity for long-term improvement

Quality Teaching and Learning
Provides resources and strategies for teachers to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment by promoting professional learning through reflective, collegial inquiry

School, Family, and Community Partnerships
Promotes child and youth success by working with schools to build culturally responsive partnerships with families and communities

Language and Literacy
Assists educators in understanding the complex nature of literacy development and identifying multiple ways to engage students in literacy learning that result in highly proficient readers, writers, and speakers

Assessment
Helps schools identify, interpret, and use data to guide planning and accountability

This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-01-CO-0013. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Moving Forward:
From Where You Are To School Improvement That Lasts

A Research-based Guide

Deanna Woods
Leadership Development Specialist
School Improvement Program

February 2002

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
101 SW Main Street, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204
503-275-9500

Table of Contents

Introduction: Complexities and Truths. v
How to Use This Guide vii

I. Establishing Collaborative Roles and Relationships Between School and District Staffs and the Larger Community

1. Identify the stakeholders in the district and schools, develop a foundation and process for stakeholders' collaborative involvement, and bring them together to focus on a goal 1
2. Develop the district-level policies, structures, resources, and funding that fully support high-performing learning communities in each school 13

II. Enabling Shared Decisionmaking

1. Set a goal of building a culture of sharing, trust, and the right kinds of risk 17
2. Open the door to school-based structures for shared decisionmaking 22

III. Getting Focused and Building Coherency

1. Prepare to establish a common goal, and coordinate all activities to reach that goal . . . 27
2. Use profiling for both depth and breadth 29
3. Get aligned 32
4. Get one plan 39

IV. Finding Time for Adult Learning, Planning, and Collaborative Work—Supporting Professional Learning Communities

1. Agree to avoid quick fixes 47
2. Make time for adult learning, planning, and collaborative work 48

V. Growing Leaders

1. Establish a structure and funding for continuous learning. 53
2. Support leaders who support effective change 57

Significant Reading 63

Toolbox: A Collection of Some of the Best Tools for Moving Forward

I. Establishing Roles and Relationships . . . . . Toolbox 2
II. Enabling Shared Decisionmaking . . . . . Toolbox 14
III. Getting Focused, Building Coherency . . . . . Toolbox 24
IV. Finding Time for Adult Learning, Planning, and Collaborative Work—Supporting Professional Learning Communities . . . . . Toolbox 44
V. Growing Leaders . . . . . Toolbox 56

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Introduction: Complexities and Truths

This guide was designed for anyone who wants to work together with others to improve schools. Whether you are a superintendent, principal, teacher, parent, school board member, or member of a service agency acting as a change agent, this is a practical guide for creating a high-performing learning community that is able to meet the highest goals for every student in its care. We start with the understanding that students must remain at the center of any reform effort.

Research, best practices, and education theory teach that a solid foundation of knowledge, skills, and practices is essential to achieving the goal of high achievement for all students. That foundation must be built of many elements, all of which are essential and accessible, and which need to be addressed simultaneously. *Moving Forward* provides baseline knowledge for establishing that foundation at district and school levels so that high-performing learning communities can be built and maintained in every school. In drafting *Moving Forward*, we have placed a special emphasis on the human aspects of change, and we urge our readers to do the same.

You will not find quick answers, and that, too, is an important message. Research and best practices reveal that school improvement is a labor-intensive, complex process of interdependent and interrelated components, involving alterations in the use of time; changes in human behaviors, social structures, and school and district cultures; and the use of many different tools and strategies. No written guide can substitute for the quality professional development and ongoing human dialogue that are essential to effective change. *Moving Forward* can, however, provide an overview, a direction, useful resources, and a research base for making informed decisions in the change process. It can be used most effectively in ongoing dialogues and in concert with the assistance of mentors, trainers, and other human guides.

The ultimate goal of change is when people see themselves as shareholders with a stake in the success of the system as a whole, with the pursuit of meaning as the elusive key.

–Michael Fullan

Successful reform efforts depend on an understanding of several needs: adequate time, effective professional development, ongoing learning, practice in new behaviors, collaboration between all school community members, patience with the change process, commitment, and support from all stakeholders. It does not matter which step you take first: "Step One" is simply any first step forward.

As a tool for change, *Moving Forward* is intended:

- **To validate what educators already know** about their professional knowledge base, which will help develop in them that sense of self-efficacy that research indicates is essential to change.

- **To identify and introduce research** that has been validated through time and other research, as well as new information to help educators and other positive change agents develop a deeper, broader, and richer knowledge base. That knowledge base should represent the very best that is known about school improvement, school change processes, teaching and learning, and the cultures in which they occur.

In sum, this guide is a tool for ensuring that the best that we know and do becomes everyday practice, with the powerful vision of realizing only the best for every generation of young people in our schools.

How to Use This Guide

Because no one text can meet all needs, users of *Moving Forward* are encouraged to employ it as a handbook and a basis for discussion in collaboration with other stakeholders in their school communities.

Use this guide as a handbook

As a handbook the guide identifies the "bottom line" of school improvement efforts—that is, which elements research, best practice, and theory indicate are most important. Such a focus helps to ensure that stakeholders avoid unnecessary loss of valuable time and resources—which include the training and professional development necessary for building their skills and knowledge base. The contents of the guide are divided into topics that appear routinely in research and other school improvement literature. The "Significant Reading" and "Toolbox" sections provide additional sources and resources to help stakeholders expand and build upon their knowledge. These latter items are not complete—no single document can assume to exhaust all resources—but they will serve as a starting point to add to stakeholders' existing knowledge and help lead to more resources. The search itself will be enriching.

In the research provided, school staffs and other stakeholders will also find solid evidence that they can use to gain agreements that are necessary and to advocate for the resources they need in moving forward in the change process. Central office staff and school board members will find in the research an indication of what their most effective roles are in support of their schools. The "Toolbox" also provides readers with a short summary of the levels of research identified by Ellis and Fouts (1997) as an aid in their decisionmaking process. Research should be regarded as descriptive rather than prescriptive. Educators and their service providers are well advised to examine thoroughly the application of research to practice before implementing change, and to monitor and evaluate their implementation plans faithfully. Notably, users of this guide need to examine all five major sections, which comprise interrelated and interdependent knowledge bases.

Use this guide as a foundation for discussion

As a foundation for discussion this text can serve to direct the interactions between stakeholders that are also required for effective change. Research indicates that effective learning involves ongoing companionship, dialogue, skills practice, review, and metacognitive practices. Senge, et al (2000) identifies dialogue as the source for the most effective practice for team learning:

> During the dialogue process, people learn how to think together—not just in the sense of analyzing a shared problem or creating new pieces of shared knowledge but in the sense of occupying a collective responsibility, in which the thoughts, emotions, and resulting actions belong not to just one individual, but to all of them together.

During these dialogues, an emphasis on both process and content of change is necessary to success. For that reason, stakeholders should engage in dialogue about:

- Why changes are needed
- What changes are needed
- How changes should be implemented

Dialogue works not only to build stakeholders' knowledge and skills—which will increase their levels of competence and autonomy—but also the interrelatedness that helps all stakeholders maximize their effectiveness in the school improvement efforts.

I. Establishing Collaborative Roles and Relationships

Between School and District Staffs and the Larger Community

1. Identify the stakeholders in the district and schools, develop a foundation and process for stakeholders' collaborative involvement, and bring them together to focus on a goal

Building Effective Stakeholder Relationships— A Serious Matter of Commitment, Collaborative Involvement, and Getting to Know Each Other

One task of stakeholders in the school improvement process must be the establishment and maintenance of committed and collaborative relationships between all those who will be affected by the changes—which means all those who are vested in children's education and are concerned about the good of the community as a whole. This is one of the essentials of public engagement in school improvement, as are additional components identified throughout this document, including but not limited to a communications system, inclusive treatment of all stakeholders, and training. Stakeholders include teachers, board members, central office personnel, principals, students, and the public—parents, guardians, businesses, and community members at large.

All stakeholders should be represented in the change process. One well-recognized and respected authority on school reform, Michael Fullan, writes that "educational change is a process of coming to grips with the multiple realities of people, who are main participants in implementing change" (2001). Those relationships need to be built with the understanding that research shows the public not only cares about schools, but also believes in community involvement. Often, however, it is educators who must

People not only care about the schools, they say they want to increase community involvement in them.

—Just Waiting To Be Asked,
Public Agenda

take the initiative to build the collaborative and committed relationships that are essential to the support that success requires.

Among the implications of coming to grips with the realities Fullan writes about is the responsibility of educators and other stakeholders to learn about each other: their perceptions of schools, their personal goals as well as goals for education, their vision for students, their needs, and the like. In order for stakeholders to get to know each other, systems need to be established that not only collect and organize information about stakeholders in useful ways, but that also bring people face-to-face in meaningful and constructive ways. Demographic information is valuable in providing an overview of a community, but the richness of collaborative activities and opportunities to get to know each other as individuals is also necessary to making effective change.

TO DO:
Build a system that regularly brings stakeholders face-to-face in meaningful and constructive ways.

Engaging Stakeholders in Action—Making a Commitment to a Shared Vision and Process

Once stakeholders are identified and it is time to plan activities for engaging them, it is well to remember this truth: shared engagement that first develops and then helps to pursue a shared vision has proven benefits. Maslow's studies of high-performing teams found that the exceptional teams were distinguished by their identification with their work borne out of such a vision and commitment to it: "...you couldn't define [the worker's] real self without including that task" (1965).

In the case of school improvement, our vision—our goal—encompasses the best that we can do for students. It is one of the highest of goals in our society. Successful change requires the commitment of all stakeholders to this vision and also to the process designed to achieve it. From extensive studies and research literature review, Darling-Hammond (1997) has concluded:

> Policies should allow for widespread engagement of a school's constituencies in the process of considering, developing and enacting changes. Communities must have a substantial role in constructing their own reforms...when people are asked merely to implement ideas handed down to them by others, these ideas are bound to be poorly understood and mistrusted unless people have an opportunity to create

TO DO:
Pursue a clear, shared vision.

adaptations that will be valued and appropriate in the local context. Success comes when reformers provide those who must create change with the leadership that enables them to take charge of their own reform process rather than be smothered under prescriptions for implementation.

Engaging Stakeholders in Action—Taking Roles of Communication, Trust, and Building on Strengths

In engaging the community, administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, parents and guardians, and even student participation, the development of ongoing two-way communication systems and the building of trust and mutual respect must be accepted as essential. These two components help each constituency to trust that its feedback and contributions are valued, and to develop a sense of ownership in the school improvement process. In achieving the goal of creating the best education possible for all students, stakeholders must be involved in

- Identifying the specifics of what comprises the best education for students
- Identifying the best research-based means of establishing those specific components in their district and schools based on identified student needs
- Designing an implementation plan that addresses those components
- Regularly monitoring and adjusting the implementation plan for reaching that goal

A growing body of research in the area of social context indicates that cultures of caring and trust have a strong impact on the effectiveness of stakeholders' organizations engaging in such a process.

Why Caring and Trust Are Important: Their Effects

According to a year-long Claremont Graduate Schools study of the social structures inside four public schools (Poplin & Weeres, 1992), a majority of the problems of schooling were found to be the consequences of the deeper issues of negative human relationships, particularly between students and teachers. Poplin and

TO DO:

Build ongoing two-way communication among stakeholders and a culture of trust and mutual respect.

Weeres found that positive feelings about individuals who were caring, respectful, honest and open in their dealings with others within schools were related to positive feelings about the schools themselves. Those who had negative feelings about the school they attended associated the school with "fear, name calling, threats of or incidents of violence, as well as a sense of depression and hopelessness." The findings of Poplin and Weeres (1992) suggest a connection between the nature of human relationships and such problems as low achievement and high dropout rates. In her examination of research, Hord (1997) found that positive human relationships within educational learning communities were related to positive feelings about school and professional improvement.

Other researchers have also found a strong relationship between adults' collaborative behaviors and students' positive attitudes and cooperation with each other (Seeman & Seeman, 1976; Smith & Scott, 1990). When adults engaged successfully in collaborative activities, modeling those behaviors, students tended to reflect their examples.

How Stakeholders Can Contribute: From Their Strengths

In engaging stakeholder involvement, constituencies must be asked to contribute from their strengths. In a study report funded by the American Federation of Teachers, Annenburg Institute, George Gund Foundation, National School Boards Association, and U.S. Department of Education, the research foundation Public Agenda (Farkas, Foley, & Duffet, 2001) concluded from the attitudes on public engagement in schools that:

> You can't talk about everything all the time, and it would cease to be effective if you did. Both parents and other members of the general public are quite willing to delegate many education decisions to teachers, principals, superintendents and board members in their community. In general they respect their judgement, and few seem eager to wrest control or endlessly second guess decisions that depend mainly on professional experience and judgment.

Decisions about instructional strategies, classroom management, specific professional development, or school scheduling related

TO DO:

Ask people to contribute from their strengths.

directly to classroom instruction are often made by educators and based on professional education, experience, and judgment. Decisions about educational goals, school structures and services, development of school profiles, or the structures for community involvement within a school community, for example, may be collaboratively made by all stakeholders, based on information that all stakeholders share.

The contributions that stakeholders make from their positions of strength must be respected and considered, and they must have assurance that they are heard. They must be able to see a link between their contribution and the decisions that are made.

Engaging Stakeholders—Involving Teachers

Public Agenda (2001) also noted in the report that the most urgent message is the "need for district leaders and education reformers to put the essentials of public engagement to work with the nation's teaching corps." What is missing from the engagement of teachers is evident in their response to how they have previously been involved in the improvement process.

According to the Public Agenda findings, a significant impediment to teachers' involvement as stakeholders is that during the complex process of school improvement, teachers often see themselves as "buffeted by forces beyond their control, and decisions are taken without their input," and "face time does not seem to be the problem—responsiveness seems to be" (Farkas, Foley, & Duffett, 2001). In sum, they feel that "much of student achievement is taken out of their hands...." The processes for engaging stakeholders in the change process—communications systems, shared decisionmaking structures, for example—must leave all stakeholders with a sense that their contributions are valued and have influence.

Effective collaboration by its very nature develops in its participants a sense of efficacy that is necessary to effective change. It is reasonable to conclude that when collaboration is done well, in the spirit of sharing between equals in intent and significance regardless of roles, then those relationships will help stakeholders reach their goals.

Engaging Stakeholders—Building Competence, Creating a Collaborative Culture of Equals

Research reveals evidence that successful change is more likely to be accomplished when stakeholders have the information and training to make informed decisions, when they possess a sense of competence in the change process, and when they feel they are operating in a culture of equals.

For example, research studies find that educators most receptive to change and willing to change behaviors are those who possess a high sense of self-efficacy (Hord, 1997; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; Rosenholtz, 1989). Self-efficacy is the quality of feeling able to meet, or do what is necessary to meet, challenges, or problems, with the probability of success.

The most successful schools in a comparative study that echoed a "wide array of supporting educational research" were those in which "collaboration among teachers—team teaching and shared decisionmaking was an organizational feature" (Ashton & Webb, 1986). According to Ashton and Webb, educators in these schools exhibited a "common sense of accomplishment, of belief in their efficacy." While questions surrounding this research may resemble a chicken-and-egg controversy as to whether efficacy or competency came first, the indication from research is that building high levels of competency and a sense of autonomy through stakeholders' increased knowledge and skills, abilities to affect outcomes through their efforts, and trust and respect of others, can lead to a sense of efficacy that in turn can lead to effective changes in practice.

This research also helps us understand some of the reasons why some schools succeed in reform efforts and some do not. Knowledge, wisdom, skills, respect, and trust help build what researchers describe as a sense of efficacy. Those who grow rich in these qualities tend to get richer, while the "poor" in such qualities get poorer as they fall behind. In a study of 13 schools adopting external reform models, Datnow (2001) observed that three of the five schools that were able to sustain the reforms and were "viewed as highly effective" had staffs who demonstrated "efficaciousness in dealing with new demands [that] was both a cause and an outcome" of others' perceptions of them as:

TO DO:

Build stakeholders' sense of competence, autonomy, and interrelatedness.

- Being effective
- Performing at or above expected levels
- Having institutionalized their reforms

Entering into the change process with an efficacious attitude helped them to address both internal and external changes more successfully than the nine school staffs without an efficacious attitude that eventually put reforms on the "back burner," or dropped the reforms altogether. The success of these three school staffs bred more success, while most others fell behind—a strong argument for paying serious attention to the need for training and professional development at every step of the change process.

Another strong reason for building every stakeholder's levels of competence and autonomy, particularly through sharing of knowledge and decisionmaking, is that schools and districts are then able to create structures and cultures that continue successfully beyond the inevitable changes in personnel over time. As a warning, Fullan (2001) writes that "Management, leadership, and change gurus can bring about especially seductive kinds of dependency.... Gurus cultivate dependent disciples rather than independent thinkers."

Fullan also emphasizes the need for comprehensive knowledge and commitment in his observation that "promoters of change need to be committed and skilled in the change process as well as in the change itself." It is not enough to be committed to a particular goal and to be limited to an understanding of that goal. Stakeholders need to understand the nature of the journey as well as the destination.

TO DO:

Build and share a strong knowledge base.

Stakeholders need to understand the nature of the journey as well as the destination.

Addressing Issues of Cultural Diversity Through Collaboration—Developing a Culture of Equals

Building a sense of competency, autonomy, and interrelatedness in and through collaborative and knowledge-sharing structures is especially important in addressing the issues of cultural diversity and tapping the many strengths of stakeholders. The Executive Director of the National Black Child Development Institute noted that "for involvement to be meaningful, it must occur between people who view themselves as equals" (Moore, 1991).

The quality of stakeholder involvement is determined by the quality of the relationships developed between community members, parents, and district and school staff, and of the knowledge and understandings, and the learning time they share.

One of the most effective ways to develop the most productive relationships is through repeated face-to-face interactions during which positive behaviors are practiced. A reminder that the goals of mutual understanding, learning, vision, and efforts are not reached quickly or easily was provided by Elmore (2000) in his argument for standards that give "guidance and direction." Elmore describes what it takes to learn new ways of working together:

> People make these fundamental transitions by having many opportunities to be exposed to the ideas, to argue them into their own normative belief systems, to practice the behaviors that go with these values, to observe others practicing those behaviors, and, most importantly, to be successful at practicing in the presence of others (that is, to be seen to be successful).

And the most powerful incentives for the fundamental transitions needed for reform, Elmore writes, are those which "reside in the face to face relationships among people in the organization, not in external systems."

The most powerful incentives for the fundamental transitions needed for reform are those which reside in the face- to-face relationships among people in the organization, not in external systems.

–Richard Elmore

Walking the Talk, Modeling the Talk: Upholding High Standards of Collaboration and Trust at Every Level–Including Central Offices

To promote the kinds of trust and risk in the autonomous structures that foster effective reform—such as school teams engaging in shared decisionmaking and drafting improvement plans, school systems must "incorporate them [trust and risk] into their own administrative cultures" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). The principles that most promote student learning at the school level must also be modeled at the central office levels.

For example, in order to promote quality, excellence needs to be rewarded at the district level as well as at the school level, and lifelong learning and collaboration should be demonstrably valued. To do this, school boards need to establish policies that

promote collaboration and lifelong learning for both central office staff and school staff, and to support those policies with funding for ongoing professional development as well as time for collaborative activities.

Furthermore, there must be "trust in expertise and in processes of collaboration and continuous improvement." According to Fullan and Hargreaves (1996), this kind of trust "maximizes the benefits of risk." A risk that districts take with effective change processes is seen in the time required to reach their goals; they may not see satisfactory short-run results. Notably, overnight transformations in educators' skill levels will not likely result from early training sessions or first collaborative meetings. Research indicates that learning and change is a process requiring the acquisition of new information and finding connections with prior knowledge, practice or application of the new knowledge, development of deeper understanding through interactions between learners, and further practice (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Morrissey & Cowan, 2000). Research indicates that those in leadership positions need to trust the process and not look for immediate results, however desirable they might be. The risk of taking the time to "do things right" has frequently been rewarded by districts' or schools' achieving their long-range goals.

Some methods for central offices to "model the talk" in their efforts to meet long-range goals include:

- Providing funding for professional development at the district level as well as the school level
- Maintaining district-level communications with the community that in turn supports school-level activities, communications, and vision
- Holding the central office accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities to schools through careful monitoring of central office support activities
- Following through in a timely manner every promise made to schools

Communications That Count, Interactions That Make a Difference Toward Coherence

To ensure success, the different parts of problems need to be tackled "simultaneously, to see their connectedness, and to appreciate and act on the big picture" (Sarason, 1990). Included in the list of implications of this reality for district and school actions are the kinds of information that are shared by stakeholders in collaborative efforts, as well as the methods for sharing that information.

TO DO:

Build a system for two-way ongoing communication between stakeholders.

Methods and Reasons for Communication

In their study of stakeholders regarding public engagement, Public Agenda (2001) found that school board meetings are perceived as an ineffectual means of engaging the public. Because the majority of stakeholders tend to feel either disenfranchised, committed elsewhere, or comfortable about delegating authority to educators, these and similar structures are most likely to draw individuals with a specific, limited agenda. Too, meetings between administrators and teachers have historically been numerous but unproductive. Clearly, the complexities of school improvement require that changes be made in the ways that stakeholders have been engaged in the past. Districts and schools need to adopt systems of ongoing, two-way communication between stakeholders, and to be particularly sensitive to both the messages and the methods of communication systems.

Research continues to find evidence that the most effective schools are those with ongoing interactions between schools and the central office and board (Coleman & LaRocque, 1990; Fullan, 1991; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). In order for schools to receive their needed support, they must keep the district informed. For schools to succeed in their improvement efforts, the district must provide the supports as promised and as needed in a timely manner, all based on an accurate knowledge of the schools' profiles and implementation plans which the schools have provided the district in a timely manner. Districts and schools need to monitor their communication system regularly to ensure that the flow of information is ongoing and adequate for stakeholder' needs.

One inherent advantage in maintaining a two-way flow of information is that through it leaders in the change process can learn "the values, ideas, and experiences of those who are essential for implementing any changes" (Fullan, 2001) to provide the most effective supports for implementation plans. One reason for this two-way flow is that central office leadership needs to avoid taking actions that run counter to the realities which school site personnel face on a daily basis. Tackling the powerful task of school-based shared decisionmaking, for example, is difficult without training; effective training is virtually impossible within the confines of most school schedules, when teachers may be with students for six to eight hours before embarking on training that requires energy and fresh minds. Also, data-based decisionmaking for lesson design cannot be accomplished if the district-generated data is unavailable when the planning is being done; or if the time needed for planning is already committed to other district-mandated requirements. Such an information exchange and ongoing recognition of the realities of implementation are necessities.

At the school level, the same principles apply, though effective practices require greater frequency and more direct personal contact with more individuals than at the district levels. Effective communication from school to home and from home to school have been delineated by several researchers, including Epstein, Coates, Salinas, Sanders, and Simon (1997), who identify the following as successful sample practices:

- Conferences with every parent at least once a year with follow-ups as needed
- Language translators to assist families as needed
- Folders of student work sent home weekly or monthly for parent review and comments
- Parent and student pickup of report cards
- Regular schedule of useful notices, memos, phone calls, and other communications
- Effective newsletters including information about questions, reactions, and suggestions
- Clear information about choosing schools, and selecting courses, programs, and activities within schools
- Clear information on all school policies, programs, reforms, assessments, and transitions
- Annual survey of families on students' needs and families' suggestions and reactions to school programs

TO DO:

Learn the "values, ideas, and experiences of those who are essential for implementing any changes."

– Michael Fullan

One significant responsibility which the district must assume in concert with schools is helping to establish policies that designate two-way communication as a priority, and then to provide resources—including training in development and use—to support them.

The Messages in the Communications: A Matter of Content and Method of Delivery

Throughout this guide are various messages to be found that must be shared and agreed-upon, not once but revisited, confirmed, and affirmed many times. Those who want school improvement cannot assume that everyone is in agreement on even the need for change. According to a Public Agenda study (1997), there is a serious "disconnect" between what the public wants, related to school reform, and what school reformers propose.

At some point, but preferably at the beginning of collaboration, stakeholders must agree to such basic premises as the need for school improvement, and their agreement must be based on the solid foundations of facts, research, best practices, and the other understandings related to identified student needs and the change process. They also must be able to effectively articulate the reasons for their agreement, not only to help confirm their ownership of the agreement, but also to build their capacity as supporters and advocates for school improvement. In order to achieve this agreement effectively, the collaborative structures, communication systems, cultures of caring and trust, and knowledge sharing that this guide identifies must be established.

Also important to the success of improvement efforts is the acknowledgement that the actual messages stakeholders exchange involve both the tangible and intangible. Clarity in communications, communication in the language of the persons receiving the messages, concrete information, willingness to listen, patience, and timely answers to questions will help convey the intangible messages of respect, trust, and willingness to collaborate. For non-English language speakers, providing materials in their language conveys a message as important as the actual content of the materials. District and school staff efforts to get to know all stakeholder groups, and to help stakeholder groups to know each other, will be rewarded as they use this knowledge and understanding to craft the means and the messages of communication.

2. Develop the district-level policies, structures, resources, and funding that fully support high-performing learning communities in each school

Becoming the external Support System That Schools Need

Newmann and Wehlage, whose research found schools at the center of what they call "circles of support," concluded that schools "are nested in a complex environment of expectations, regulations, and professional stimulation from external sources" (1997), all of which either support or undermine improvement efforts at the school levels. Datnow and Stringfield (2000) write that "the sustainability of a reform relies on support from multiple levels. However, these levels are typically ill coordinated, hence creating major obstacles to long-term school improvement."

If schools are to succeed, they must have ongoing, reliable support from their district offices and school boards rather than structures and policies that—as Newmann and Wehlage noted in failing reform efforts—pull them in different directions, impose unreasonable regulations, or instigate "rapid shifts in policy and leadership" (1997). In summary, schools need central offices and school boards that are trustworthy, promote stability, know and monitor the implementation plans of their schools, do what is needed to support coherence in planning and implementation, and listen well.

Research reveals that from their external supporters, schools need:

- Discussion and negotiation of school improvement plans
- Access to resources
- Gathering and reviewing of performance data that is of importance to the school
- Examination of staffing and inservice needs

In studies of comprehensive school reform by the Rand Corporation (Bodilly, 1998; Farkas et al, 2001), the district support that was found to be essential to schools involved in reform efforts included:

- Leadership backing and stability
- Centrality of effort
- Lack of crises
- History of trust and cooperation
- Resource support
- School autonomy
- Union support
- Aligned assessment

A more pointed consideration focuses simply on the working conditions of staff members. Lieberman and Miller's (1999) analysis of research literature found that the "strong connection between students' learning and teachers' workplace conditions cannot be ignored. In schools that do not find the balance, trouble looms ahead." Clearly, teachers'—and other educators—working conditions are students' learning conditions. Because of schools' needs for the above services and conditions, school boards and district-level personnel need to begin early to lay the groundwork for those supports.

Adequate support—personal and professional—for principals is also extremely important. Fullan (2001) documents the stress and frustrations inherent in principalships in his review of research, noting that, "There is no question that the demands on the principalship have become even more intensified over the past 10 years, five years, one year." The study of the scale-up phase of New American Schools models found that principal turnover was associated with lower levels of model implementation (Bodilly, 1998).

Also clear is the need for districts to provide additional supports for schools when principals leave, helping to ensure that replacements support the reform efforts (Buechler, 2000a). The change process itself has a strong impact on both organizations and the human beings who comprise them. District support for school-level reform should be carefully maintained during personnel changes, with special attention given to the effects of those changes on the staff and community members remaining.

Finding the Funding—The Art of the Possible!

The impossible is becoming the art of the possible as districts grow wiser and more knowledgeable in their search for funding,

a necessary support for schools. Increasingly, studies are finding that districts can assist in several ways (Buechler, 2000a):

- Add or reassign staff to support reform
- Commit additional money from general funds to existing school budgets
- Take the lead in seeking additional funds from state, federal, or foundation sources

Support in the form of fund reallocation is also significant. Buechler (2000a) identifies three steps:

1. Pool existing per-pupil and supplementary funds at the school level.

2. Grant schools the authority to spend their dollars as they see fit in support of their comprehensive vision. As CPRE researchers wrote in States and Districts and Comprehensive School Reform, "Budget flexibility at the school level is critically important because the cost structure for each design is quite different from that in a traditional school, and sites need the authority to reallocate school resources—particularly school personnel resources—to the needs of their chosen designs."

3. Provide technical assistance to schools in the use of funds. School-level personnel generally are not accustomed to having discretion over their entire budget. Nor are they familiar with complex state and federal rules regarding expenditure of funds. District officials will have to work closely with school staffs as they estimate resources, calculate costs, and make spending decisions.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

II. Enabling Shared Decisionmaking

1. Set a goal of building a culture of sharing, trust, and the right kinds of risk

Sharing Power, Building Capacity

To pursue success in reforms, educators must develop knowledge and skills in "sharing power"—teachers with students, principals with teachers, school systems with their schools (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). As Fullan and Hargreaves have noted, "the culture of the district impacts on and helps shape the culture of its schools," which places the onus of responsibility on more than one level. In embarking on a change process, leaders and others at both the school and district levels who take the leap into action must be ready to foster the autonomy, competence, and interrelatedness of all stakeholders, and especially of those closest to the classroom. In the process of doing so, they must build a culture of sharing, trust, and the right kinds of risk.

The culture of the district impacts on and helps shape the culture of its schools.

–Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves

Case Study

One example of successful capacity-building and sharing of power that has seen results in higher student achievement comes from the Reynolds district in Oregon, described in excerpts from the NWREL Signature Series document (Buechler, 2000b) below. For example, the district demonstrated its commitment to change by dedicating time and professional growth opportunities to meet instructional needs:

> Professional growth opportunities abound in Reynolds. By adding 15 minutes every other day to the school schedule, the district is able to provide teachers with six inservice days, the maximum allowed by state law. During those six days, which are distributed over the school year, school staffs engage together in a variety of activities focused on helping students meet standards.

> The district also provides workshops each designed around what teachers report they need. Teacher teams at the high school and middle school level (and in some elementary schools) provide another opportunity for teachers to plan and learn together.
>
> There's also a nationally recognized mentoring program that enables veteran teachers to guide new ones through their first year.
>
> The Reynolds Academy provides another opportunity for teachers to learn from their peers.... Expert teachers from within the district are hired to train their peers during the summer.

Next, collaboration built on mutual trust and respect between administration and staff became standard practice in the district:

> Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the mentoring program, summer academy, and teacher evaluation plan is that they were developed and funded jointly by the district and the Reynolds Education Association. Unlike many districts, in Reynolds the central office and teachers' union work closely together.... Through a process of weekly meetings and non-adversarial discussions over a period of years, administration and union representatives grew to trust one another and initiate collaborative work.

In addition to these activities, the Reynolds district, through collaboration, adopted the core principles of "consensus-driven decisionmaking, focus on student performance, reliance on data and research, and commitment to continuous improvement" (Buechler, 2000b). The district encouraged high levels of school autonomy, as schools formed and maintained school improvement teams that examined data, and developed, implemented, and monitored the progress of improvement plans.

Reynolds' example of labor-management collaboration in this area is reflective of the findings in a national study (Quellmalz, Shields, & Knapp, 1995), which was that districts need to work with unions to find practices that support school autonomy and maintain employee rights, progressing "beyond an adversarial labor vs. management model of collective bargaining to

one emphasizing collective professional responsibility for educational improvement."

Buechler (2000b) noted in his review of Reynolds' reform efforts that "every single individual interviewed for [this] article, without prompting, mentioned key articles, books, or studies as they discussed school and district initiatives." The benefits of stakeholders' ongoing engagement in collaboration and learning cannot be overstated.

Setting the stage for lasting reform means institutionalizing the structures that provide all necessary professional development of the highest quality in both content and process. To maintain a high-performing learning community in every school site, stakeholders need to have depth and breadth of knowledge and skills, and their learning must be ongoing. The professional development provided to educators must be research-based in format and delivery. Structures such as peer observation and support, lesson study groups, or structured reflection protocols can be invaluable in helping improve educational practices. (See "Toolbox" for more details.)

Thinking About Competence, Autonomy, and Interrelatedness

Affirming decades of sociological research findings, three studies that examined ten psychological needs of humans found three qualities consistently at the top of the list: autonomy, competence, and interrelatedness (Sheldon, Elliot, Kim, & Kasser, 2001). According to Sheldon and his colleagues, individuals need to have the "feeling that [they] are the cause of their own actions rather than feeling that external forces or pressures are the cause." Furthermore, individuals also need to feel that they "are very capable and effective in [their] actions rather than feeling incompetent or ineffective," and that they have "regular intimate contact with people who care about [them] rather than feeling lonely or uncared for."

In the process of making changes that involve and affect many people, a large body of research reveals the necessity of acknowledging the nature of the human beings involved and affected. Stakeholders must assume, first, that such needs as

TO DO:

Transform the district and each school into a system that fosters autonomy, competence, and interrelatedness of stakeholders.

those for competence, autonomy, and interrelatedness exist. They must then take such needs into account as they engage in the change process. Consequently, it is important that stakeholders make every effort to get to know each other, and to establish systems that help them to do that. For stakeholders, ongoing two-way communication, training and professional development, respectful attention to the details and nature of diversity, and many other components in the change process must be acknowledged as necessary because they address the human issues that can produce success.

In a partnership with five schools of low-achieving students, the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory found that one need proving an impediment in the staffs' efforts to improve student learning was the need for training in dialogue techniques, norms, and conflict resolution (Morrissey, 2000). Cohen's (1986) research and work with cooperative small group learning led to her conclusion that effective cooperation involves learned behavior, which requires training and practice for mastery.

Case Study

Examples of autonomy used effectively in concert with competence and interrelatedness may be found in some of Newmann and Wehlage's (1997) studies of effective schools. The staff of Okanagon Middle School, a school of mostly poor and minority students, won grants from their state and various foundations for planning, development, and implementation of school reform. Given wide latitude by their district, the staff worked together to engage in several activities intended to help them learn what could be done to improve student learning, including visiting other restructuring schools, holding retreats, purchasing books on school reform, and engaging in extensive dialogues. They wrote academic and behavioral standards to guide their students' and their own work, which in turn "shaped the day-to-day language and expectations of students, parents, and staff who saw the standards as important guides to teaching, learning, and personal behavior" (Newmann & Wehlage, 1997).

When district regulations began to interfere with the work of the Okanagon school community, staff agreed to pursue the employment of a state law that allowed increased autonomy through charter status. Besides site-focused innovations that enabled the school community to carry out their vision, the new

status also enabled them to collaborate with public and private human service organizations to better meet students' social and health needs. In order to coordinate these services, "the school and county created a new organization that operated independently of the district." In summary, Okanagon's school community was able to make considerable progress toward their goal because they developed their levels of competence and interrelatedness, which in turn helped them develop and employ the advantages of high levels of autonomy.

Sharing Decisionmaking, Sharing Knowledge and Involvement

At the school level, sharing decisionmaking means stakeholders must assume multiple responsibilities, among them garnering the informed involvement of administrators, teachers, paraeducators, students, and parents and guardians. Wherever possible, parents and students should participate in the work of school site councils that help organize and monitor the change process, goal setting, and development and implementation of school improvement plans. Parents and other community members can also participate in external study teams as "critical friends" that develop profiles for school and district. Review and adoption of proposed goals requires the participation and agreement of community members, whether at the district or school levels, as does an implementation plan.

A culture of shared decisionmaking depends heavily on an effective system of two-way communication established at both school and district levels that supports the culture, which requires staffing time and reliable funding. Research finds that communication needs to be timely, consistent and frequent, complete with information about follow-through on promised actions, and clear and useful to intended audiences (Giacobbe, Osborne, & Woods, 1998). Time should be given to developing effective methods of communication based on the nature and needs of the community—including the school community—as a whole.

Notably, in the school improvement process, a lack of communication is often associated with deprivations in other areas. Morrissey (2000) observed in her work with five low-achieving schools that the staffs had "very few opportunities, either within

Community encompasses the relationships that occur day-to day. It involves teachers, students, families, neighborhoods, and beyond. It is built around shared experiences involving common struggles, successes, and failures. It is sustained by structures that promote dialogue about students, learning, teaching, curriculum, expectations, and results.

—Anne Lieberman and Lynne Miller

school or outside of it, for staff to do fun things together, learn together, laugh together, or just get to know each other." The lack of such opportunities was also accompanied by a lack of trust between staff members, a lack of "times or structures... designated specifically to facilitate collaboration among teachers," and a lack of efficient systems for communication which led to "misinformation and confusion." Missing, too, were organizational systems for "making requests, identifying concerns, allocating materials or resources, or handling necessary paperwork," which were linked to staffs' perceptions that their work was not respected. Teachers and administrators in these schools had low expectations for themselves "as professionals and as self-learners," and for students and the "district/community /state as viable support systems." Just as "no man is an island," according to the poet Donne, so no single challenge is an island, but is related to the whole.

2. Open the door to school-based structures for shared decisionmaking

A Farewell to "Top-down" for Good Reason

Darling-Hammond (1997) notes that according to the findings of Mohrman and Wohlstetter (Mohrman, Wohlstetter, & Associates, 1994), "work that is complex, uncertain, and group oriented is often best accomplished when employees involved in service delivery are also directly involved in planning, allocating resources, and controlling performance."

An important understanding for stakeholders to have is that the effects of shared decisionmaking and the structures that support it go beyond the more obvious purpose as a tool for facilitating school improvement. Reports of highly successful schools in studies by The National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching (NCREST) at Teachers College, Columbia University, indicate the notable value of shared decisionmaking. One example of the benefits of shared decisionmaking is represented in a conclusion drawn from the experiences at New York City's International High School: "There is a relationship between the management style of a school and the learning style in the classroom. When the management style

is authoritarian, the learning style in the classroom is authoritarian and teacher driven. When we change the management style to a more democratic, collaborative style, it becomes a model for learning in our classrooms" (Defazio & Hirschy, 1994).

Further evidence of the value of shared decisionmaking and collaboration may be found in the work of Newman and Wehlage, acting for the Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools. From their analysis of more than 1,500 schools over five years, Newmann and Wehlage (1997) created a practical list of structural conditions that would "increase the success of educators and parents working together to enhance organizational capacity to improve pedagogy and student learning":

- Shared governance that increases teachers' influence over school policy and practice
- Interdependent work structures, such as teaching teams, which encourage collaboration
- Staff development that enhances technical skills consistent with school missions for high quality learning
- Deregulation that provides autonomy for schools to pursue a vision of high intellectual standards
- Small school size, which increases opportunities for communication and trust
- Parent involvement in a broad range of school affairs

Responsibilities of Shared Decisionmaking

Some of the areas of stakeholder responsibilities in shared decisionmaking are outlined by the Manhattan International teacher contract (Darling-Hammond, 1997):

> We firmly believe in the school-based management and shared decisionmaking model of school governance and that all members are co-participants in such a governance body, with the understanding that they intend to abide by staff decisions, and take responsibility for the school's work, its outcomes and daily practices.

Darling-Hammond's review of the NCREST studies (1997) identifies several potential responsibilities that shared decisionmaking opens for school staff, among them involvement in teams that:

The school must be small enough so that everyone can know everyone else, and respond easily to needed changes. Teachers, kids, and families who do not share a common geographic, ideological, or historic community, need optimum face-to-face contact over many years to build a strong school-based community with a coherent common set of understandings.

–Deborah Meier

- Focus on a shared group of students and their needs
- Plan curriculum
- Serve as a schoolwide coordinating council
- Plan and implement professional development
- Interview and hire staff
- Deal with parent involvement issues

Darling-Hammond describes five features of these successful schools that supported decentralized information and shared knowledge:

- Team planning and teaching
- Cross-group structures for planning, communication, and decisionmaking
- Professional development
- Shared, rich information about students, families, and classroom work
- Highly visible shared exhibitions of student work

Echoing a host of researchers, Darling-Hammond further observed that shared knowledge such as that gained through the five features is essential to informed decisionmaking.

The District's Role—Support in Abundance

Districts bear a great responsibility in the success of shared decisionmaking structures. For one thing, districts need to be ready to provide schools with the information they are responsible for collecting, in order for school staff to have as complete a picture of their work and its outcomes as possible, when the information is needed. According to research, schools need a "steady flow of information about their work and its outcomes and continual opportunities to build their knowledge" (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Stringfield (1995, 1998; in Datnow & Stringfield, 2000) states that "a school or school system could be regarded as highly reliable" when, among other significant characteristics, it supports:

> The building and maintenance of powerful databases. These databases are (a) relevant to core goals, (b) rich in triangulation on key dimensions, (c) real-time available (i.e., before failures cascade), and (d) regularly cross-checked by multiple, concerned groups.

Schools with productive autonomy also require from their district the resources of time and person-power to establish and maintain two-way communications at the school and community level, as well as with the district. They need high-quality professional development to learn the skills and knowledge needed to engage successfully in the new structures, as well as to improve classroom practices. And they require school board and district policies that enable their staffs to make decisions and act on those decisions without unnecessary interference or newly imposed programs and responsibilities that are not compatible with each school's improvement plans. Such requirements are a tall order, but necessary.

Fullan's (2001) review of several studies of districts, including the Rand Change Agent study (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977) and others (Berman, McLaughlin, & Associates, 1979; Elmore & Burney, 1999; Huberman & Miles, 1984; LaRocque & Coleman, 1989), found a pattern: "All of these studies show that the chief district administrator and central district staff are an extremely important source of advocacy, support, and initiation of new programs." At the school level, Fullan (2001) found the principal to be the "'gatekeeper' of change, often determining the fate of innovations coming from the outside or from teacher initiatives on the inside." Quality district support for schools and school leaders is clearly significant.

Research reveals that districts bear the burden of serving in several different areas, interdependent and interrelated. Like the making and baking of basic breads that comprise the core of many societies' diets, each ingredient is essential to the outcome—and the quality of the ingredients has much to do with the quality of the outcome.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

III. Getting Focused and Building Coherency

1. Prepare to establish a common goal, and coordinate all activities to reach that goal

A Goal—and a Coherent Plan for Reaching It

According to the findings of Senge, "Without a pull toward some goal which people truly want to achieve, the forces in support of the status quo can be overwhelming" (1990). In setting the stage for school improvement, stakeholders must be engaged in the action of establishing a common focus, a common goal. They must also expect, as they set that goal, to create a coherent plan for achieving it. In a metaphorical sense, restructuring schools is the case where all roads should lead to Rome.

If schools are to be effectively changed, then those in the school community must scrupulously avoid what Tyack calls "tinkering toward utopia" (1990), or doing what Conley (1993) calls "incremental restructuring"—a process of making small, incremental changes over time rather than developing and implementing a coherent plan. To date, research finds only discouraging results for such restructuring.

The school community must also guard against the spending of enormous amounts of energy and resources on well-intentioned programs that are not clearly connected to, or contributing to the achievement of the major goal. Where coherency in the focus and the plan design is low, implementation of school plans will be scattered and incomplete (Berends, Kirby, Naftel, & McKelvey, 2001). In a regional forum on low-performing schools convened by the U.S. Department of Education and Consortium for Policy Research in Education, practitioners, researchers, and policymakers noted that low-performing schools often are embroiled in the dilemma of having plenty of funding combined with a "disconnected set of programs layered one on top of another," an embarrassment of riches in solutions

Incrementalism—the gradual process of changing dimensions of organizational functioning to improve goal achievement—has been described by Tyack as "tinkering toward utopia."

—David Conley

having no coherence and consequently having little positive effect on student achievement (Housman & Martinez, 2001).

Goal-Setting Made Possible– With "Just the Facts, Ma'am and Sir"

Based on his studies of education reform and the essential elements that are required for success, Odden (1998) recommended that districts use "an assessment system that provides baseline data and that will indicate progress in accomplishing both the district's overall goals and each school's performance targets." This is one step of many in gathering the variety of data needed to develop a realistic, comprehensive, and helpful picture of where a district and its schools are, as they set out to establish realistic goals.

Goal-setting undeniably requires informed decisionmaking. One of the earliest steps at both district and school levels must be the gathering of data and other information to find out the answer to the important question, "Where are we?" This gathering and sharing process must be made mutually supportive and an integral part of district and school practices. If students are to be served well by their educators, then those educators must continually be learning about their students, their educational context, themselves, and the process they are engaged in, all through a variety of timely ways that includes partnering with parents and guardians.

To be effective, the district needs to establish systems for ongoing collection of information, organizing the information in understandable ways, and for sharing that information with stakeholders, so stakeholders are fully informed when they need to make decisions. Arriving late for a plane flight or late with the data has the same results: the travelers do not get to their destination on time—if ever. In order to set and reach goals at district and school levels, both district and school profiles need to be developed—and on time for their use in planning.

According to researchers Joyce and Showers (1995), successful schools in their studies all:

> Have had specific student learning goals in mind, have employed procedures tailored to their goals and backed by rationales grounded in research, have measured learning out-

TO DO:
Create a coherent whole of school programs and plans–make your plan one plan.

When it comes to school improvement, all roads should lead to Rome. Coherency should be a watchword of the change process.

comes on a formative and summative basis, and have employed substantial amounts of staff development in recognition that the initiative involved teacher and student learning of new procedures. Data about the progress of implementation was collected regularly and made available to project personnel.

2. Use profiling for both depth and breadth

Unpacking the Puzzle of Profiling—The Why

In participants' training materials, NWREL's Onward to Excellence II (OTE II) school improvement process describes a profile as a document that "describes the general context of the school, schoolwide student performance, and current baseline conditions" that in the beginning of the process "provides a snapshot of the present state of the school." In the later phases of the school improvement process, the profile provides more "in-depth diagnostic information on critical school practices that affect school performance in the school improvement goal area, and information for monitoring the school's progress" (2000).

Profiles are necessary for service both as baselines of information and as benchmarks against which districts and schools can regularly check their progress. Quality profiles are valuable tools for setting improvement goals, diagnosing problems, and assessing the effectiveness of components in school and district improvement plans.

The following information is provided so that school staffs can identify the necessary ingredients for profiling, and central office staffs and school board members can identify their roles in supporting this activity.

Unpacking the Puzzle of Profiling—The What

The contents of a useful profile include such elements as school/district/community context data, student performance data, and organizational/instructional effectiveness data. All elements are necessary to help ensure informed decisionmaking.

TO DO:

Create profiles for establishing baseline data and measuring progress toward goals. Make them accessible, user-friendly, and updated annually.

Context data include but are not limited to demographic information that clarifies the general environment influencing student learning. In this case, "environment" means more than just physical space; it also includes the social framework and any other factors that influence student achievement.

Student performance data detail student achievement related to and available in each content area, as well as behavioral and attitudinal data.

Organizational/instructional effectiveness data include but are not limited to information on classroom practices, or levels of participation in professional learning community activities.

Unpacking the Puzzle of Profiling—The How

Schools in the Onward to Excellence II (NWREL, 2000) process use basic ingredients for creating profiles that help them not only know "where students and staff are" but also to help indicate "where they need to go." For effective data use, they develop a three-fold profile, using:

- **A prologue** describing the source of the data and what the data represents: Where was the data found? When? From whom? By whom? How large is the sample, collected over what period of time? Why is the information significant?

- **Data displays**, or graphs, that may provide averages; patterns of students' performance; comparisons between students, between city, state and national data, between males and females where relevant; and disaggregation, based on any issues significant to achievement, such as socioeconomic status of students. Careful development and use of data displays makes possible an understanding of multi-year trends.

- **Narrative statements** that represent objective assessment of the data.

Profiling steps are basic and all are essential:
1. Select the contents
2. Collect and prepare the data
3. Develop the data summaries

4. Review the profile
5. Finalize the profile
6. Share the profile

To help ensure school improvement success, the following rule should be as binding as law: District and school profiles need to be accessible, user-friendly, and updated annually.

Using the Tools We Need: Profile for Focus

Districts and schools are often data rich. Such wealth must be tapped regularly for focusing the improvement efforts. Using data effectively means that districts and schools gain a rich return on the investments of their time and other resources required to collect the data. It also means that once a profile has been developed fully, stakeholders need to follow another set of essential steps. Onward to Excellence II schools report success with a sequence of four steps.

First, at the school level, stakeholders in leadership positions—ideally a trained committee of representatives from the school staff, guardians or parents, business community, and possibly central office staff and/or school board, or other influential community members—must collaboratively select narrative statements derived from the data that best represent the concerns and challenges of the school community. These statements must reflect their overall goals and priorities. At district levels, a similar committee is needed, with representatives from all groups of stakeholders, including the school board and central office staff.

Second, leaders need to discuss the selections with the school and/or district community. Community input on school priorities based on profile results is essential to the community understanding of the reasons for change, to building their support for proposed changes, and to preparing community members for their role in the processes of informed decisionmaking.

Third, stakeholders in leadership positions work collaboratively to use the community's feedback to establish four to seven preliminary goals, lead the school community through a process to prioritize those goals, and then to select and draft one or two priority goal(s).

Fourth, leaders share the selected goal or goals with the entire school community.

From that point, the leadership needs to develop an implementation plan to achieve that goal(s).

3. Get aligned

What We Don't Know That We Don't Know Can Hurt Students

One considerable challenge to school improvement is that of grappling with insufficient knowledge: insufficient knowledge about student skill levels, about their backgrounds, about the actual resources and processes needed for school improvement, about the standards of achievement that may be set by state or local agencies, and about content or pedagogy in either breadth or depth. Even more challenging are the obstacles set when educators and others don't know what they don't know.

In situations where "incrementalism" is common, it is also probable that the best of intentions will win no reward because of lack of knowledge about what does and does not work. While staff and the larger school community intend to hold students to high standards in an effort to raise student achievement, for example, it is possible for most stakeholders to have little understanding about how those standards should be reached, even when they agree upon standards. Staffs may have little or no training in the standards or the pedagogical strategies necessary to teach to standards. Historically, educators have engaged frequently in a variety of unrelated activities at their school sites intended to help raise student achievement—an approach with the view that "more is better," but which serve only to exhaust human and other resources with little or no impact on student learning. For example, schools often exhibit pride in having a potpourri of programs, which might include everything from a reading program, a character education program, a parent involvement program, art events, back-to-school nights, and student incentives program, a math and science program, community outreach, and career experience program—all important on their own but relatively ineffective at improving student learning

when not organized into a coherent plan and when not also addressing issues of content, classroom management and instructional strategies.

According to Public Agenda's "Reality Check 2000" survey of teachers, parents, and students, "While talk about standards is ubiquitous, teaching patterns remain much the same." Notably, states' adoption of standards and national dialogues about the necessity of raising student achievement to meet the challenges of a changing society and global economy may not reflect what is actually taught in the classroom. A growing and broad base of evidence indicates that there has been little change in teaching practices and also still much unknown about what is actually happening in the nation's classrooms, especially in our present system of isolated professionals. Students may be hurt—academically and socially—when a school's stakeholders do not know what they do not know.

One example of students being hurt by what stakeholders do not know has been highlighted in the findings of the U.S. Department of Education and Consortium on Policy Research in Education (see bibliography) report, Third International Mathematics and Science Study, or TIMSS (1998). This report revealed that American curriculum in science and math "lacks rigor, focus, and coherence." Examining the fragmentation of American curricula revealed through the TIMSS, researcher Schmidt and his colleagues (1997) found that "the curricular data make it clear that the U.S. does more of this [fragmenting], and does it more consistently, and does it more extensively [than other nations]. We find a level of fragmentation in our unfocused curricula not often matched. Our curricular vision is certainly splintered in this way and, usually, far more so than most other countries." Researchers Schmidt and Wang (1999) learned through their studies that unlike teachers in nations where students exhibited higher achievement levels in math and science and where curriculum is more focused, teachers in U.S. elementary or middle schools tended to teach a collection of topics one at a time in an unconnected way.

In concert with TIMSS, Stigler and Hiebert's examination of teacher classroom practices in three nations (1999) also revealed that while teachers may be familiar with standards, it is quite different from having the necessary depth and breadth

of understanding needed in today's classrooms to help students achieve those standards. Echoing a growing number of researchers' findings, they noted that teaching in U.S. classrooms frequently demonstrated a misinterpretation of research or standards documents and resulted in less effective teaching.

Significantly, Schmidt and Wang (1999) concluded from their studies that U.S. teachers in the 20th century were teaching what America at large expected them to teach, which made changes in American educational practices more difficult to achieve. Teachers, like other groups within a society, often respond to public opinion about what should or should not be taught, and how. This latter finding has implications for all stakeholders. If teachers are to change their instructional practices, using research-based strategies whenever possible, working toward mastery of their profession, then they not only need better access to professional knowledge, they also need public support for their changes in practice. This reality constitutes another argument for stakeholders' acquisition of a common knowledge and understanding of what is needed and why, of what constitutes research-based practices, and of how changes are to be implemented.

It takes time and adult work—such as professional learning with access to science-based research, planning lessons, collaborating with colleagues, and partnering with parents or guardians—to move from educational novice to master in the necessary understanding of content, standards, and pedagogy for improving student achievement.

Finding Out About What Is—or Is Not—Going On in Each Classroom: Aligning and Mapping

At the most basic levels, time and adult work are required to learn about what actually is being taught in classrooms and what is being overlooked, or what is being taught insufficiently for students to meet high standards. Under the present system of teacher isolation, where teachers have little time to interact in detail on actual classroom instruction throughout a year, a student could easily travel from early to later grades missing one or another topic within an academic area, leaving a gap in his or her education.

In the studies of "time on task," gaps in student learning were

discovered to be, in part, a function of students' need for sufficient time to be exposed to, and learn, content (time spent) in relation to the time required by individual students for learning that content. If a student needs two weeks ("academic learning time") to learn a given phonemic concept, then, according to studies by John Carroll and later in the California Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study (BTES), that student will fail to learn the concept fully in less time. In their research synthesis on time factors, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT, 2001) also notes that:

> Carroll suggested that learning is dependent upon the amount of time students actively spend learning something compared to the amount of time students need to learn something. In other words, if a student needs 60 minutes to learn or master a new skill, does this student spend a full 60 minutes working on learning the skill? According to Carroll's model, if this student spends less than the needed 60 minutes learning the new skill, he will not completely master it.

Examining the findings of the California Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study (BTES), AFT (2001) states that "teachers who allocate more time to a specific content area have students who achieve at higher levels than teachers who allocate less time to the same area." While research indicates that in order to learn, students must be *engaged* in "actively working on learning activities or tasks at an appropriate level of difficulty," also known as "academic learning time" (AFT, 2001), the issues of time allocation are significant. One effective tool that can be used to help address this issue is the process of aligning and mapping the curriculum.

Along with ongoing professional development and regular interaction between education professionals, alignment and mapping of the curriculum can assist in overcoming the problem of "not knowing" what students are learning in the full range of their classes over years and between content areas.

Aligning and Mapping for Coherence

Aligning and mapping the curriculum requires that districts and schools examine standards at every level—state, district, and school (including grade levels)—to ensure that the curricu-

la are aligned with those standards, and, where they do not, that the necessary alignments are made. This is an invaluable and labor-intensive set of tasks. Staff discussions are necessary to help ensure common understanding of standards as they are stated and as they relate to one another. As with all effective school improvement components, taking shortcuts is to tempt mediocrity, and training is necessary to complete the tasks most effectively. The rewards of aligning and mapping are long term.

Mapping the curriculum effectively requires staff dialogue on what students need to know and be able to do—essentially what standards mean in a real classroom, what is and is not being taught over the course of a given year in each course, and then matching these findings to established standards. It enables staff to examine their students' whole-school learning experience, and to find gaps or overlaps in the course content or processes. Aligning and mapping require training and work in both planning and completing the activities, and time for the execution and application of the activities. Consequently, districts and schools should expect to make firm commitments to using this component for school improvement as they do with the other components.

The value of school and district commitment may be seen in the conclusions drawn from Jacobs (1997), an expert in the field:

> For curriculum planning, maps reveal a wealth of information. Gaps in the content become evident, and repetitions are easily spotted. With teacher input, decisions to address gaps and repetitions are based on both developmental ability and sequencing.
>
> Curriculum development is an ongoing process of evaluation, a continuous effort to incorporate new technologies, research, and methodologies into the overall scheme, even as the goal remains constant: a curriculum that prepares our students to meet the highest standards.
>
> Curriculum maps are the tools of the practitioners, the foundation upon which other work is based.

Steps in Aligning and Mapping

While specific step-by-step methods of aligning and mapping differ, the patterns of data collection, staff dialogue, examination of gaps or repetitions in curricula, and adjustments in practice merge in the various tasks of the aligning and mapping processes.

Jacobs' Steps to Aligning and Mapping

Heidi Hayes Jacobs (1997) identifies seven steps:

Data collection. In "maps," teachers describe the processes and skills emphasized in their classrooms; the content in terms of essential concepts and topics, or content examined in essential questions; and the products and performances used as assessments of learning.

Mixed group review. Staff members meet in mixed groups, avoiding their usual team members or colleagues, to share their findings regarding the maps. Teachers report what they find of any "gaps, repetitions, potential areas for integration, mismatches between outcomes and curriculum, and meaningful and non-meaningful assessments."

Large group review. Small groups convene in the whole group to report on their findings and to chart all of the reports.

Determination of points for immediate revision. Working in a group or groups, whichever structures are best suited for making such decisions for the school, staff members examine data and determine what revisions should be made (see details of "mixed group review," above) and how.

Determination of points for long-term research and development. Groups identify areas that require in-depth investigation for identifying solutions. Such areas may involve changes in a variety of grade levels, departments, or structures.

Review cycle. Jacobs maintains that "curriculum review should be active and ongoing," and more frequent than a five-year review.

Onward to Excellence II
Steps to Aligning and Mapping

The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's Onward to Excellence II program incorporates the following steps into its school improvement training. During this process, schools focus on one goal area at a time, selected after the school profile is completed.

Review of state standards and state tests in the school goal area. In interdisciplinary teams, staff members review the alignment or gaps between their state's standards and its test objectives. One goal of this activity is to examine, through dialogue, the variety of interpretations between teachers within the school and between the school and the state, helping to build understanding of the application of standards to the classroom. Another point of teacher dialogue is the identification of standards that are not tested or any test objectives that are not aligned with any standard, so that teachers can make appropriate adjustments to their curriculum.

Unpacking goal-area standards. In interdisciplinary teams, faculties discuss details of what students should know and be able to do in order to master state standards. Discussion includes an examination of what instruction is appropriate to assist students in meeting the standards, and further clarification of the terminology of the standards.

Articulating goal-area standards. In states without designated learner outcomes for each grade level, the interdisciplinary, cross-grade teams create specific, grade-level learner outcomes for each standard or benchmark. The purpose of this articulation is to provide a developmental plan of instruction which is initiated well in advance of state assessments, allowing students the appropriate time and support necessary for their mastery of the goal area subject. An example of groups' thinking is given in the trainers' manual (NWREL, 2000) regarding argument analysis:

> If a student is to analyze an argument at grade 8, then he or she must first learn what persuasive writing is, learn various types of persuasive writing, and apply them in different situations in previous grades before the strength of an argument can be analyzed in grade 8.

Creating curriculum maps. In teams appropriate to the school's organization, staff members record their currently taught curriculum across all grade levels and content areas to both the school calendar and the goal-area standards. In the process, each staff member must identify how he or she supports student achievement in the goal area, and when that support is provided.

Comparing curriculum maps to aligned standards, outcomes, and objectives. Staffs determine the strengths and challenges in their curriculum in comparison to aligned standards and test objectives. Examining their own students' test scores, staff members identify critical areas for improvement and establish schoolwide priorities for instructional improvement in anticipation of the development of a school improvement plan. They also review and adjust their maps to eliminate unnecessary repetition and to strengthen their instruction in the goal area standards that are weakly addressed. In addition, staff members may identify or create opportunities to build from the instruction occurring in other classrooms in the school.

4. Get one plan

The Power of Well-Combined Ingredients

The appeal of a gourmet dish's ingredients in their natural form, before being combined in whatever form its recipe takes, varies. Salt consumed by the spoonful will not charm anyone except the most long-suffering, while sugar may appeal universally. The power of a quality recipe, as with any quality plan, is its single-focused, well-designed, and coordinated movement toward the ingredients' becoming one single treat of interrelated and interdependent taste experiences.

The history of American education is full of the experiences of one fad after another and of programs adopted and abandoned within a short period of time (Ravitch, 1985). With the best of intentions, schools often have adopted a myriad of individual program packages for reading, math, special education, cooperative learning, and parent involvement until their own histories are packed with long lists of activities and programs having little or no relation to one another, sometimes having little or no sci-

ence-based research underlying their design, and each drawing upon the energy and resources of their staffs who struggle to make them work.

While the text which the reader now holds hardly connects to the Julia Childs of our society, the principles of developing quality plans and of effectively implementing the components of those plans coherently are the same. As noted earlier in this chapter, an incremental approach to school improvement, where we "taste" one program apart from our other programs, is courting failure. Yet research reveals that incrementalism is more the rule than the exception. Schools and districts adopt program after program, and sometimes drop them, with insufficient time or labor or resources given to integrate them into a single, complex, and focused plan. If students are to get the best education we can provide, we must turn that situation around.

The importance of what is known as "systems thinking" was brought first to the attention of the larger public through Senge's *Fifth Discipline* (1990). These ideas have been applied more directly to education in *Schools That Learn* (Senge et al, 2000), in which systems thinking is described as:

> A different way of looking at problems and goals—not as isolated events but as components of larger structures.

Beginning at the district level as an example, Senge (2000) states:

> The superintendent's office, after all, is a system: composed of the habits and attitudes of the people who work there, the policies and procedures imposed by the state and the community, and such implacable forces as available money and student population.

At the school level, the value of systems thinking has increasingly gained support with each new round of research into the components of successful schools. Newmann and Wehlage's (1995) five-year study of successful schools led them to conclude that the "task for schools, then, is not to simply offer space and opportunity for individual teachers to teach. It is to organize human, technical, and social resources into an effective collective enterprise."

The task for schools, then, is not to simply offer space and opportunity for individual teachers to teach. It is to organize human, technical, and social resources into an effective collective enterprise.

–Fred Newmann and Gary Wehlage

Newmann and Wehlage also found that the role of external agents—mentors, service providers, central offices, school boards, and others—for successful schools was to help them achieve that single focus. The tools for change must all be employed toward one goal or set of goals and within one unified movement toward that goal. Central offices, school boards, community members, and other stakeholders increase their effectiveness when they bend their efforts toward the single focus, the coherent plan, the "effective collective enterprise." Inside each school, staff and other stakeholders need to work toward the single focus of a coherent plan, employing the resources and support provided them by external agents as well as those developed on their own. Within each school needs to be the organization of "human, technical, and social resources into an effective collective enterprise."

TO DO:

Develop, implement, monitor, and adjust a single coherent plan.

Profile, Plan, Implementation—and Around Again: It's a Natural Thing

Like most components of change, a process for "getting a coherent plan" has several logical and essential steps to it. At the school level, these steps take the following form.

The Search—Professional Learning in Action

Once a goal or goals have been selected through the processes of profiling and of aligning and mapping, and shared with the community, an investigation of science-based research and respected educational theory needs to be set in place to find the most effective means of reaching those goals. If the interest is in raising mathematics scores, then staff members, preferably divided into study groups geared to various topics related to that goal, should embark on an examination of what educational research/theory finds to be the most effective means of reaching the selected goal. Study groups can engage in a variety of searches, tapping online sources as well as external agents such as district school improvement mentors or professional librarians, regional laboratories, and universities. Each study group, having learned what is known about effective practice, can make recommendations for actions to the school's leadership committee.

Example: School A's stakeholders decide, based on their school profile, that student reading scores need improvement. The School Improvement Team identifies five topics for study groups, including reduction of class size, cooperative small group learning, Lesson Study for professional development, reading skills, and metacognitive skills. After examining the research base on cooperative learning, that designated study group recommends to the School Improvement Team a professional development series in the contents of Elizabeth Cohen's (1986) *Designing Groupwork*, a meeting with parents and guardians to explain and illustrate the purpose and methods of cooperative small group learning, and tools for assessing teachers' growing skills in its use as well as the effects of cooperative small group learning on students' reading skills.

Prioritizing

Equipped with the study groups' recommendations, the school's leadership team examines the total field of recommendations for their potential, as a systemic whole, to help achieve the goal(s). In the process, the committee should check for a balance between schoolwide and classroom-based recommendations, and then select those do-able actions that will contribute most to goal achievement.

Example: School A's School Improvement Team accepts all three of the recommendations on cooperative learning, as they address both schoolwide and classroom goals by engaging parents as well as building teachers' professional skills in use of cooperative learning as an instructional strategy. Furthermore, these recommendations fit those of the Lesson Study group: training in Lesson Study would assist teachers in planning lessons that more effectively use cooperative small groups as a means of teaching reading. The study group on reading skills, having focused solely on classroom practices, decides to review the research further before finalizing recommendations, in order to fully promote effective schoolwide practices that would enhance classroom instruction.

Draft Plan Development

With priority recommendations in hand, the school's leadership team then creates a general timeline of the major components. Included in their responsibilities are the development of specific implementation steps and the target dates for those steps, and the incorporation of that information into a draft implementation plan. The plan must encompass provisions for monitoring implementation progress as well as the other, more familiar components—student progress in academic, behavioral, and attitudinal areas; classroom practices, and schoolwide practices. Components for renewal are also essential, including, but not limited to addressing the issues of staff turnover, changes in leadership, updating the profile, renewing or re-prioritizing resources, and professional development.

Example: Working with recommendations from all of the study groups, the School Improvement Team takes extensive time to lay them out on a timeline grid, identifying responsible parties, needed resources, and other pertinent information that can assist implementation. In the process, recommendations that appear too difficult to implement, given the school's resources, or which do not fit into the plan as a coherent whole, are set temporarily aside. For example, limited funding does not allow the school to reduce the size of all classes, so the decision is made to find ways to place students into small classes some of the time for reading instruction. Integrated into the plan is the appointment of one experienced teacher as mentor to new teachers entering the school in year two, to ensure that all instructors become expert in the use of cooperative learning. The timeline grid, originally drafted on newsprint extending across one wall of the meeting room, is transferred to computer files for reproduction and sharing with other stakeholders for their feedback.

Presentation to the Community

When the draft is prepared, the school's leadership team plans a presentation and then makes the presentation to stakeholders for feedback. In doing so, leaders must give stakeholders enough time to answer to their questions, to consider the plan carefully and discuss it thoroughly, and to provide thoughtful feedback to

leaders. During this time, the leadership committee informs the school board and central office of their process.

Example: The School Improvement Team schedules presentations of the draft plan for their entire staff and the community, also inviting school board members and central office representatives to the sessions. In each case, stakeholders are provided with copies of the plan and with opportunities to ask questions and engage in dialogues about the strengths and challenges of the plan. Stakeholders also discuss possible improvements. Members of the School Improvement Team record their recommendations and responses, and take care that stakeholders understand the process of plan development, feedback, and implementation, so they realize how their feedback will be used and how they may be involved in the plan's implementation.

Plan Revision and Finalization

With feedback, the leadership committee can revise the plan, present the revised plan to the school community for final approval, and then disseminate the final plan to stakeholders.

Example: The School Improvement Team meets again to review the feedback they have received, and to make adjustments in the plan. During the community meetings, parents recommended that after-school sessions be held for parents to learn the cooperative behaviors recommended by Cohen, so they can reinforce those behaviors at home. The Team assesses the feasibility of such sessions, and builds that component into the plan. The revised plan is submitted to the school community through regular distribution channels for advanced reading and review, and follow-up meetings are scheduled for dialogues. Feedback is again reviewed by the Team, adjustments made, and the final draft is then distributed to stakeholders in preparation for implementation.

TO DO:

Follow the process for effective school improvement without compromise. Take no shortcuts.

Implementation Phase

Now comes additional hard, but undeniably worthwhile, labor—the implementation of the plan as revised, following timelines, monitoring progress, and adjusting the plan as needed.

Example: The implementation plan is followed according to the timeline, with regular meetings of the School Improvement Team to monitor its progress. Reports from their findings on progress are reported to the school board and central office staff, as well as the community. When teachers decide they want additional time to examine research on classroom management in order to better manage small groups, they report their interest to the School Improvement Team, which builds provisions for that study into the plan, with professional development time and materials made available through the district office.

Renewal!
Around Again, Forever

As the initial implementation of the plan begins, the leadership committee should set its attention to the task of implementation plan oversight, including renewal components: timely updating of the profile and revision of the implementation plan based on the newest findings of the updated profile; guidelines for changes in the School Improvement, or Leadership, Team; and provisions for mentoring new staff and for gaining the involvement and support of new parents and community members.

Effective school improvement is an ongoing process, a testament to lifelong learning and human striving for the best that can be accomplished. The phase of renewal is idealism and realism acting hand-in-hand.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IV. Finding Time for Adult Work

Learning, Planning, and Collaborative Work– Supporting Professional Learning Communities

1. Agree to Avoid Quick Fixes

Taking the Good Road...

One of the findings of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is that American curriculum stresses coverage "a mile wide and an inch deep," a practice that leaves students in "unfocused and splintered" studies throughout their education (Schmidt, 1999). In her study of learning communities, Hord (1997) found that "a quick-fix mentality, especially prevalent in U.S. culture, resulted in many schools being poorly prepared for their plans for change and therefore implementing change in a superficial and less-than-high-quality way." The evidence is clear that the "desperate rush to reform" that Stigler and Hiebert (1999) and many other researchers note in their work has not served American education well. In fact, they write, "The evidence suggests that efforts to produce rapid, wholesale change have failed to improve schools in virtually every case." Maeroff (1993) writes that "to talk of school restructuring without addressing the problem of time is to imagine that work gets done without anyone doing it." The National Education Commission on Time and Learning (1994) concluded from their studies that the present system is flawed and that "both learners and teachers need more time, not to do more of the same, but to use all time in new, different, and better ways." Examining the larger picture of school improvement, Fullan (2001) reminds his readers that "change is a process, not an event—a lesson learned the hard way by those who put all their energies into developing an innovation or passing a piece of legislation without thinking through what would have to happen beyond that point."

It is very important that those wanting effective and lasting school improvement agree to take the time needed to do well and thoroughly what must be done. The quick fix has been tried—and it did not work to meet students' needs.

Change is a process, not an event.

–Michael Fullan

TO DO:

Find the time and take the time to do things right.

Taking a stand for long-term school improvement rather than focusing on short-term gains may not be popular. However, those who take the stance have research, best practices, and the most respected education theories on their side. To ensure agreement on avoiding quick fixes, all stakeholders need an opportunity to learn and discuss the knowledge base of effective change with other stakeholders, preferably guided by a mentor with depth and breadth of knowledge in the change process.

TO DO:

Find and bank time for adult work.

2. Make time for adult learning, planning, and collaborative work

Banking Time and Growing Richer—How to Make Time

In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 90 schools find five days for professional development and planning by adding a few minutes to school days over the course of a year. Central Park East in New York City links student community service and staff development by scheduling students into nonprofit agencies one half-day a week while teachers "use the time for true staff development" (Pardini, 1999). For 25 years, the Iowa City Community District has released its students one hour early one day every week to provide time for staff work and development beyond the classroom.

Such examples of creative thinking can be found virtually everywhere. The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory is developing a research-based tool for school improvement, "Creating Time for Professional Learning Teams" (in draft) that addresses this issue for educators.

Get Out the Word! Win Commitment to Time for Adult Learning and Work

One of the most difficult challenges in America is to win community commitment as well as educators' commitment to time for "adult" work outside the classroom and during the school day—work such as collaboration, professional learning, and planning. Once that commitment is made, policies and

resources need to be set in place for that adult work to occur. Research indicates that such commitment and resources are worth stakeholders' efforts to win them.

Studies of educators' time use around the world find that many outside the United States spend notably less time in the classroom and more time engaged in adult work (Consortium on Productivity in Schools, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1995; Perkins, 1992). Hord (1997) echoes these findings, noting that "it is clear that in countries such as Japan, teachers teach fewer classes, using a greater portion of their time in planning, conferring with colleagues, working with students individually, visiting other classrooms, and engaging in other professional development activities." DuFour and Eakers' (1998) review of international practices found that unlike American teachers, most educators in other countries spend from 15–20 hours of a 40–45-hour week with students and are then able to "think about and discuss the lessons they teach; to share plans, materials, and ideas; to tutor students; or to consult with parents." Maeroff (1993) writes that "Change will be held back as long as the notion persists that teachers are at work only when they are in their classrooms instructing children."

What is emerging in research from both within and without education is an understanding of the considerable value of what is termed "professional learning communities."

TO DO:

Enable all stakeholders to learn the reasons why and how adult time is essential.

Professional Learning Communities—Their Past Uncovered

Professional learning communities are not a new invention. They have existed in small pockets here and there in schools in the United States and a variety of European and Asian nations, wherever staff members have formed groups that engaged in continuous learning. Hord's review of research literature (1997) describes them as "the professional community of learners, in which the teachers in a school and its administrators continuously seek and share learning, and act on their learning." What may be considered new is the growing understanding of their great value, of what makes them work, and of the importance of engaging this phenomenon more widely for students' benefit.

Hord identifies several attributes of professional learning communities:

- Supportive and shared leadership
- Collective learning and its application
- Shared values and vision
- Supportive conditions (physical factors and people capacity)
- Shared personal practice

In her summary, Hord describes the requirements necessary for "organizational arrangements" that result in academically successful professional learning communities:

- The collegial and facilitative participation of the principal who shares leadership—and thus, power and authority—through inviting staff input into decisionmaking
- Collective learning among staff and application of the learning to solutions that address students' needs
- A shared vision developed from an unswerving commitment on the part of staff to students' learning and consistently articulated and referenced for the staff's work
- Physical conditions and human capacities that support such an operation
- The visitation and review of each teacher's classroom behavior by peers as feedback and assistance activity to support individual and community improvement

TO DO: Develop the support structures and provide the resources for an effective professional learning community at every site.

The Evidence Supports Professional Learning Communities

There are many research-based reasons for restructuring time to support professional learning communities that should be shared among stakeholders are:

- A collaborative environment has been found to be the single most important factor in school improvement (Eastwood & Louis, 1992), with "increased student learning...inextricably tied to teacher learning and collaboration" (Morrissey & Cowan, 2000).

- Lieberman and Miller (1999) echoing the findings of decades of research, conclude that a "two-pronged focus on students and

Follow the research-based guidelines for adult learning.

teachers" is "a crucial element in successful school restructuring." Successful school restructuring depends on the provision of resources and other supports to meet staffs' professional as well as personal needs, including professional development. Schools need to be a place of learning for educators as well as students.

- A growing body of research confirms the link between weak professional learning communities and ineffective student instruction (Little, 1982; McLaughlin and Talbert, 1993; Newmann & Wehlage, 1997; Rosenholtz, 1989). Leading researchers have concluded that "Without companionships, help in reflecting on practice, and instruction on fresh teaching strategies, most people can make very few changes in their behavior, however well-intentioned they are" (Joyce & Showers, 1995). As a result of their studies of learning communities and research literature, Cowan and Hord (1999) note that "within such communities, the staff, intentionally and collectively, engage in learning and work on issues directly related to classroom practice that positively impacts student learning." Stigler and Hiebert's (1999) extensive studies of classroom teaching through TIMSS and related research reveal that "almost all successful attempts to improve teaching have involved teachers' working together to improve students' learning," a claim that is "one of the most well-supported conclusions in literature on educational improvement."

- Issues of school climate and community are addressed through professional learning communities. Researchers Smith and Scott (1990) found evidence that "schools whose teachers cooperate with one another are characterized by cooperation among students." Hord's (1997) synthesis of research identifies in professional learning communities "a willingness to accept feedback and work toward improvement." Boyd (1992), found several positive qualities to be characteristic of professional learning communities:

  Positive teacher attitudes toward schooling, students, and change;...collegial relationships among teachers; positive, caring, student-teacher-administrator relationships; a sense of community in the school; and...supportive community attitudes; and parents and community members as partners and allies.

- Documented benefits of learning communities to students have been decreased dropout rates, fewer skipped classes, lower

absenteeism, greater academic gains than in schools without learning communities, and smaller gaps between students from different backgrounds (Lee, Smith, & Croninger, 1995). Darling-Hammond (1995) has noted that schools with learning communities show evidence of improved academic results more quickly than schools without. Little (1990) found "higher quality solutions to problems; increased confidence among all members of the school community; more systematic assistance to beginning teachers; and an increased pool of ideas, materials, and methods" (in DuFour & Eaker, 1998).

For the Top of the To-Do List

An understanding of the weight of research findings and the importance of time dedicated to building and sustaining high-performance learning communities at school sites must be shared by stakeholders early in the reform process, laying the groundwork for the development and continuing support of learning communities. As noted above, research evidence indicates that time spent in planning, professional development, and collegial activities—adult work—is rewarded with higher student achievement.

Adult work and continuous learning outside the classroom must be regarded as valuable. Resources, including adequate time, must be dedicated to both.

V. Growing Leaders

1. Establish a structure and funding for continuous learning

Lifelong Learning is Lifelong for Everyone

The title of this chapter has at least two sides to its interpretation. First, we can look at "growing" as a verb. We find that fine leaders are not generally born to their status; rather, they are individuals who, through hard work, learning, and experience, develop the skills and knowledge to serve well as leaders. There are indications in research that we can "grow" many of our needed leaders in education through providing the support, professional development, and experience necessary to the process. Second, we can see "growing" as a modifier, reminding us that quality leaders are individuals who are engaged in a process of lifelong learning to improve their skills and understanding and, consequently, their ability to serve, directly and indirectly, the needs of the students in our schools. Summarizing her findings about leadership, Lambert (1998) stated that:

> Leadership is about learning together, and constructing meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively. It involves opportunities to surface and mediate perceptions, values, beliefs, information, and assumptions through continuing conversations; to inquire about and generate ideas together; to seek to reflect upon and make sense of work in the light of shared beliefs and new information; and to create actions that grow out of these new understandings. Such is the core of leadership.

The need for quality leadership will not decline. As we raise standards and as we acknowledge the complexity of developing high-quality schools and educators to help students meet those standards, we also establish an ongoing need for quality leadership.

In their visit to Toyota to learn how Japanese management knowledge might be of benefit to schools, Wilson and Schmoker (1992) found that management and employees were both teach-

Strengthening school leadership will require unprecedented cooperation and tolerance for blurring the roles among teachers, administrators, and staff developers. We can no longer rely on charismatic leaders to form model schools.... Instead, administrators must learn to develop the capacities of their schools and teachers.

–National Staff Development Council

ing and being taught, constantly learning from each other, and the company president was included in the process. Like the knowledge base that supports the ongoing professional learning of teachers and other educators within the context of a high-performing learning community, the knowledge base that promotes the lifelong learning of leaders—all leaders—is growing.

According to the Task Force on School District Leadership (IEL 2001), "Many superintendents, as well as some board members, say they don't have the training to handle all the new demands being placed on them." The Task Force found that many superintendents do not possess the "knowledge, training, or skills demanded of today's instructional leaders." And in our technologically active world with its shrinking borders and instant communication, the demands they face are likely to continue to grow. The Task Force found that in an increasingly diverse world, "the issues of cultural competence for district leaders will soon move to center stage." Senge et al (2000) writes that in a learner-centered culture, "all people in the system are seen as learners and act as learners. It is no longer as important to appear 'learned'....Instead, leaders expect themselves and others to be uncertain, inquiring, expectant of surprise, and perhaps a bit joyful about confronting the unknown."

In studies commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education, Goertz, Floden, and O'Day (1995) found in the work of David (1993) that:

> The new standards for students require everyone in the system, not just teachers and students to change their roles and relationships. As is true for teachers, this requires not only new knowledge and skills, but also positive dispositions about the need for and direction of change. It also requires a sense of themselves as learners who are capable of responding to the new conditions and goals and of performing their new roles.

A growing body of research also shows the value of training for parents and community members in their roles in school improvement, which addresses issues of competence, autonomy, and interrelatedness. One study worth noting is that of five urban school districts, where pronounced positive changes in schools were observed when parents were provided training,

TO DO:

Establish systems of supports for leaders and potential leaders that end their isolation, build their knowledge and skills base, and promote core personal values and standards of excellence. Provide regular time for professional interactions.

resources, and support, most successfully by community based organizations (Jones & Marti, 1994). With funding from grants designed to promote "High Expectations, High Content, and High Support," parents were taught how to access school, or "work the system" productively, and to build constructive relationships with staff members. They were also provided various opportunities to know their children's schools and given answers to theirquestions. The results included the following:

- Parents were enabled to express interest and concerns and actively advocate on behalf of their children
- Staff assumptions that parents lacked interest in education were dispelled
- More avenues for communication were created, and staff and parents were able to hold more open discussions
- Teachers were provided professional development that helped promote a greater understanding of their students, including an understanding of their varying cultural backgrounds
- Student attendance tended to improve, and changes in student behavior, perceptions of self, homework completion, and family and community mediation of conflicts were observed, along with a positive change in school climate and discipline
- A more focused advocacy for children emerged

Swick's studies (1992) of parent-teacher partnerships revealed that they were "developmental in nature and best realized through a comprehensive approach." Like all other components in the school reform process, parent-teacher partnerships are multi-faceted and take time to create and maintain.

The value of parent and community influences on children's achievement should not be underestimated. Studies summarized in *How People Learn* (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999) have concluded that "Activities in homes, community centers, and after-school clubs can have important effects on students' academic achievement." Henderson's (1987) synthesis of 49 studies on parent involvement has also concluded:

> Programs designed with strong parent involvement produce students who perform better than otherwise identical programs that do not involve parents as thoroughly, or that do not involve them at all. Schools that related well to their communities have student bodies that outperform other

schools. Children whose parents help them at home and stay in touch with the school score higher than children of similar aptitude and family background whose parents are not involved. Schools where children are failing are improved dramatically when parents are called in to help.

Henderson and Berla's (1994) later review of similar evidence found that "formal parent involvement was the single most significant factor correlated with literacy outcomes" in a study of the influences of home and school on children from low-income families (Giacobbe, Osborne, & Woods, 1998). The evidence in research indicates that parent involvement is essential to student achievement, and that stakeholder partnerships where both engage in learning bear a notable responsibility for student learning.

Lifelong Learning Takes Resources Both At Home and Beyond

In addition to the rich learning possible through shared knowledge within a school or district community, research also notes the importance of tapping into external input and networks. McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) write that "Strong professional communities, by themselves, are not always a good thing. Shared beliefs can support shared delusions about the merit or function of instructional orthodoxies or entrenched routines. This collective agreement can generate rigidity about practice and a 'one best way' mentality that resists change or serious reflection."

Darling-Hammond (1997) reflects growing views that policymakers must work to "create extensive learning opportunities for teachers, administrators, parents and community members, so that the complex practices envisioned by ambitious standards have a chance to be studied, debated, tried out, analyzed, retried, and refined until they are well understood and incorporated into the repertoire of those who teach and make decisions in the schools." Lieberman and Miller (1999) similarly urge districts' and schools' building connections to the community. When focusing on school staff issues, Lieberman and Miller note that teachers can find resources in the form of "alliances among themselves and with teachers from other schools so they

TO DO:

Provide extensive learning opportunities for all stakeholders. Build connections and alliances with other schools, districts, coalitions, and reform networks. Think inside and outside the boxes.

can explore possibilities and exchange ideas, insights, and experiences." These resources, say Lieberman and Miller, include "regional, state, and national coalitions, partnerships, and reform networks."

2. Support leaders who support effective change

On the Art and Science of Being a Leader

As noted earlier in this document, the stresses on leaders have been increasing, even as the importance of leadership positions, the importance of ongoing professional growth for all leaders, and the extreme importance of support for all leaders in their positions have increasingly been indicated in research. According to Sammons (1999), "Almost every single study of school effectiveness has shown both primary and secondary leadership to be a key factor." Secondary leadership includes such roles as those played by teacher leaders. Primary leaders who fall into the categories of requiring professional development and appropriate supports include, but are not limited to, district superintendents and principals.

Through their experiences, Hall and Hord (2001) relate their finding that "while the 'bottom' may be able to launch and sustain an innovative effort for several years, if administrators do not engage in ongoing active support, it is more than likely that the change effort will die." Hall and Hord also conclude from their own studies and reviews of research that "a different style of leader is needed for different situations."

Added to the complexity of defining and implementing changes in school and district practices is the complexity of the human factor in leadership roles. Examining the "patterns, principles, and potholes" of implementing change, Hall and Hord identify three change facilitator styles that help influence the levels of success in such implementation: Initiators, Managers, and Responders. Their findings in the research were that "teachers with Initiator principals have the highest levels of implementation success. Teachers with Manager principals are successful too, but not to the same extent as teachers in Initiator schools. Teachers with

Structural change that is not supported by cultural change will eventually be overwhelmed by the culture, for it is in the culture that any organization finds meaning and stability.

–Phillip Schlechty

Responder principals are rated a distant third in terms of implementation success." Implications of such findings are that leaders as well as those who work with them need to know and understand such differences and their effects, and that understanding will, in turn, inform decisions about the implementation of changes and about professional development needs.

A logical conclusion from research must be that if all leaders are important in the change process, if there is a variety of leadership styles with differing effects, if professional growth is essential to raising student achievement, if we acknowledge that at the heart of every change is the element of human personalities and human needs, then we cannot afford to ignore such differences or to ignore leaders' very human need to be actively supported in their efforts. Research evidence is growing that specific supports are required for any leader in the position of influencing the education of children, so that leader, in turn, can provide specific supports for others also engaged in the process.

TO DO:

Model the values and standards of excellence.

The Leader Defined—No Simple Matter

The nature of essential supports for leaders can be found in part through an examination of the characteristics of the leaders of effective schools—a vision of where the journey of professional development and growth should take them. The studies of Bryk, Sebring, Kerbow, Rollow, and Easton (1998), of Chicago schools since 1988, have revealed common characteristics among principals of successful schools:

- Inclusive, facilitative orientation
- Institutional focus on student learning
- Efficient management
- Combined pressure and support
- Strategic orientation, using school improvement plans and instructional focus to "attack incoherence"

Leaders in effective schools take different roles from those previously familiar in American education, and the pattern of what is needed is growing clearer. Notably, these roles and the skills and knowledge needed to perform them are held by leaders who are "made, not born."

A study of head teachers in successful British schools by Day, Harris, Hadfield, Toley, and Beresford (2000) reflected a large body of research findings as they reported that:

> The vision and practices of these heads were organized around a number of core personal values concerning the modeling and promotion of respect (for individuals), fairness and equality, caring for the well-being and whole development of students and staff, integrity and honesty.

Regarding their research, Fullan (2001) concludes that these "school leaders were 'relationship centered,' focused on 'professional standards,' 'outwards looking in' (seeking ideas and connections across the country), and 'monitoring school performance.'" Clearly, these leaders fostered and modeled excellence, and worked to build the capacity of those with whom they worked.

In her synthesis of the research on principals in high-achieving schools, Cotton (2001) notes extensive evidence that "strong administrative leadership, including instructional leadership, is a key component of schools with high student achievement." Principals in schools where students succeed tend to exhibit such characteristics as:

- The ability to **involve others**, including students, in setting standards for student behavior; they work to ensure a safe and orderly school environment
- Active **participation in shared leadership/decision** making and staff empowerment
- **Collaborative practices** which help establish an environment in which they and their staffs learn, plan, and work together to improve their schools
- Good **communication skills** which enable them to build positive relationships that enhance all school functions
- **Emotional/interpersonal support** of both staff and students
- A sense of **self-efficacy** about working through others to achieve school success
- The active search for, and support of, **parent/community involvement** in both instruction and governance
- A **continuous push for improvement** that is a permanent part of school life
- Involvement in **discussions about curriculum and instruction** with staff, both as facilitator and participant
- **Respect** for their teachers' skills and judgment, allowing

them considerable autonomy in organizing and managing their classrooms, and protecting them from excessive intrusion by forces outside the school
- **Support for risk-taking** in order to improve their school, including encouraging teachers to do the same
- Use of **student data** to improve programs
- Role-modeling: involvement in professional development activities; using time in ways that support student learning; **treating students, staff, and constituents with respect**

By no means is the above list exhaustive. However, this short list of the characteristics of principals of high-achieving schools parallels the essential steps indicated in the research for school improvement, and as addressed in this guide.

For the Journey: Maps, Tools, Water, Food, Shelter, Companionship, and Models

Leadership qualities cannot be developed and skills mastered in isolation, especially while in a state of constant siege. Researchers Joyce and Showers' (1995) findings that supportive companionship is needed for genuine professional growth should also be applied in the development and functioning of all effective leaders. Notably, the Task Force on School District Leadership (IEL, 2001) has emphasized the value of "distributed leadership," or collaborative relationships of leaders who "share the responsibilities which were traditionally handled by a single person." Hord's (1997) examination of research on professional learning communities revealed Rosenholtz's (1989) contention that "teachers who felt supported in their own ongoing learning and classroom practice were more committed and effective than those who did not." Hord's literature review also noted the importance of an emphasis on "nurturing and celebrating the work of each individual staff person and of supporting the collective engagement of staff in such activities as shared vision development, problem identification, learning, and problem resolution."

In her review of research literature on superintendents and their relationships to principals, Hord (1992) found that superintendents of effective districts tended to focus on:
- The provision of training and development of principals and all staff (Paulu, 1988; Pollack, Chrispeels, Watson, Brice, & McCormick, 1988)

School change is a dynamic, active process that involves changing hearts and minds as well as policies, operating procedures, and relations of power.

–Amanda Datnow and Sam Stringfield

- Acting directly with principals as a role model and teacher for principals
- Linking principals' growth to school needs
- Allocating resources to principals for their own and their staffs' professional development (Pollack et al, 1988)
- Monitoring progress by spending major time in schools and classrooms (Hill, Wise, & Shapiro, 1989) as well as collecting products of school work, participation in school ceremonies, and monitoring change in "principals', teachers', and students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors" (Pollack et al, 1988)
- Supplying technical and on-site assistance to "support site administrators in the vision of district and school change and its goals"
- Being readily accessible to principals

Hord observed that these superintendents were engaged in three roles identified by Cuban (1985)—that of manager, politician, and teacher:

> In describing these three roles in the world of schools' executive leaders, Cuban used fire as a metaphor (p. 30): the manager of a school district must be a practitioner of fire prevention; the politician has skills that can control the blazes that will inevitably erupt; and the teacher "serves as the fire starter...to alter the thinking and actions of board members, school personnel, and the community at large."

It is the role of teacher that Hord finds most superintendents give the least attention but which is also essential. Both primary and secondary leaders at the school level need support for their roles in their capacity as teacher as well as that of manager and politician.

Acknowledgement of all leaders' need for systemic supports and their benefits for students is found in the growing body of research in the area of social context. One indication in these extensive sociological studies is that the relationships between adults influence the development of relationships between adults and students, and among students themselves. Woods' (2000) review of social context research discovered that the models of behavior set by the adults around them influenced how students behaved both in and out of the classroom. One example is Schmuck's research (1982) indicating that "teachers' social competencies in working cooperatively set the psychological context for effective classroom interaction."

From the larger community to the district, school, and classroom levels, research indicates the necessity of adults' setting the standards and modeling the behaviors and values that society wishes its children to learn. Consequently, where leaders demand excellence, they must model excellence. Where leaders and other stakeholders demand excellence, they must both model it and provide the resources and tools for their leaders and others involved in school change to work toward achieving it. These standards and practices must be made an integral part of the culture of districts and their schools. There is no easy and rapid route to accomplishing such a goal. However, the good news remains for those who want the best for America's children: school communities have more resources and greater knowledge at their disposal than ever before in the history of mankind. And the rewards of that goal are more than worth the efforts dedicated to reach it.

Significant Reading

All of the following are valuable resources, regardless of whether they are annotated. Space prohibits too-lengthy a list of the rich mother lode of knowledge now available. Any of these readings will be more than worth your time, and of lasting influence.

American Federation of Teachers. (2001). *Foundations of effective teaching I: Organizing the classroom environment for teaching and learning* [Training Manual]. Washington, DC: Author.

The first of several, this is a research-based training manual for educators developed by the AFT. This manual encompasses core, or foundational, research in beginning of the school year classroom management, group management, interactive direct instruction, time on task, praise and feedback, and homework.

Ashton, P.T., & Webb, R.B. (1986). *Making a difference: Teachers' sense of efficacy and student achievement*. New York, NY: Longman.

Barkley, S. (1999). Time: It's made, not found. *Journal of Staff Development*, 20(4), 37-39.

Berends, M., Kirby, S.N., Naftel, S., & McKelvey, C. (2001). *Implementation and performance in New American Schools: Three years into scale-up*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Berman, P., & McLaughlin, M. (1977). *Federal programs supporting educational change: Vol. 7. Factors affecting implementation and continuation*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand.

Berman, P., & McLaughlin, M.W. (with Pincus, J., Weiler, D., & Williams, R.). (1979). *An exploratory study of school district adaptations*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand.

Bodilly, S.J. (with Keltner, B., Purnell, S., Reichardt, R., & Schyler, G.). (1998). *Lessons from New American*

TO YOU

To sit and dream,
to sit and read,

To sit and learn
about the world

Outside our world
of here and now–
our problem
world–

To dream of vast
horizons of the soul

Through dreams
made whole,

Unfettered free–
help me!

All you who are
dreamers, too,

Help me make our
world anew.

I reach out my
hands to you.

–Langston Hughes

Schools' scale-up phase: Prospects for bringing designs to multiple schools. Santa Monica, CA: Rand.

Boyd, V. (1992). *School context: Bridge or barrier to change?* Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Bransford, J.D., Brown, A.L., & Cocking, R.R. (Eds.). (1999). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

This is a comprehensive summary of the research on how people learn, combined with a valuable review of the implications for educational practices. This foundational piece should be readily at hand for stakeholders during their discussions of such issues as time for adult work, resources for classroom instruction, and similar issues.

Bryk, A.S., Sebring, P.B., Kerbow, D., Rollow, S. & Easton, J.Q. (1998). *Charting Chicago school reform: Democratic localism as a lever for change*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Buechler, M. (2000a). *District support for comprehensive reform*. Unpublished manuscript, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, OR.

Buechler, M. (2000b). *Setting the Standard: Reynolds School District, Oregon. Signature Series*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Cohen, E.G. (1986). *Designing group work: Strategies for the heterogeneous classroom*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Cohen's book remains a classic in describing the essentials of what is required in preparing students and lessons using cooperative small learning as an instructional strategy. She stresses the importance of teaching cooperative behaviors as a content area as well as schools' regular curricular content, to help ensure the success of this very significant strategy, and provides activities to assist educators in the process.

Coleman, P., & LaRocque, L. (1990). *Struggling to be 'good enough': Administrative practices and school district ethos*. New York, NY: Falmer Press.

Conley, D.T. (1993). *Roadmap to restructuring: Policies, practices, and the emerging visions of schooling*. Eugene, OR: University of Oregon, ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management.

Conley's wide reading and direct experiences with school reform provide a solid overview of school restructuring, complete with rationale and context, changing roles and responsibilities, and dimensions and processes.

Consortium on Productivity in the Schools. (1995). *Using what we have to get the schools we need: A productivity focus for American education*. New York, NY: Columbia University, Institute on Education and the Economy, Teachers College.

Cotton, K. (2001). *Principals of high-achieving schools: What the research says*. Unpublished manuscript, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, OR.

Cotton identifies the patterns of behavior, attitudes, and practices exhibited by principals of high-achieving schools. This information opens additional doors for a focus in administrator training, selection, and professional development as well as reinforcement of practices that lead to high student achievement. Her work enlarges the picture of what is required to help students succeed.

Cowan, D., & Hord, S. (1999, April). *Reflections on school renewal and communities of continuous inquiry and improvement*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.

Cuban, L. (1985). Conflict and leadership in the superintendency. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 67(1), 28-30.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1997). *The right to learn: A blueprint for creating schools that work*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1996). The quiet revolution: Rethinking teacher development. *Educational Leadership*, 53(6), 4-10.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1995). Policy for restructuring. In A. Lieberman (Ed.), *The work of restructuring schools: Building from the ground up* (pp. 157-176). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1994). *The current status of teaching and teacher development in the United States*. New York, NY: Columbia University,Teachers College, National Commission on Teaching and America's Future.

Darling-Hammond, L., Dilworth, M.E., & Bullmaster, M.L. (1997). *Educators of color*. Background paper for the invitational conference on Recruiting, Preparing, and Retaining Persons of Color in the Teaching Profession, January 22-24, 1996, Washington, DC.

Datnow, A. (2001, April). *The sustainability of externally developed school reforms in changing district and state contexts*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, WA.

Datnow, A., & Stringfield, S. (2000). Working together for reliable school reform. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 5(1&2), 183-204.

David, J.L. (1993). *Systemic reform: Creating the capacity for change*. Paper prepared for the Consortium on Policy Research in Education.

Day, C., Harris, A., Hadfield, M., Toley, H., & Beresford, J. (2000). *Leading schools in times of change*. Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.

Defazio, A., & Hirschy, P.D. (1994). Integrating instruction and assessment at the International High School. In D. Harrington, J. Ley-King, & A. Weaver (Comp.), *Authentic teaching and assessment: Policy and practice. Examples from the field. The second annual NCREST affiliates' meeting, March 19, 1993* (pp. 37-42). New York, NY: Columbia University, Teachers College, National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools and Teaching. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED374095)

DuFour, R., & Eaker, R. (1998). *Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing student achievement*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Eastwood, K.W. & Louis, K.S. (1992). Restructuring that lasts: Managing the performance dip. *Journal of School Leadership, 2*(2), 212-224.

Ellis, A.K., & Fouts, J.T. (1997). *Research on educational innovations* (2nd ed.). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Ellis and Fouts not only provide a user-friendly explanation of three levels of research and the application of those levels to educational decisions, they also examine some of the most popular "innovations" in terms of their research bases. One of their goals is to help decisionmakers avoid the perils of fads and make the best use of the quality research available for school improvement efforts.

Elmore, R.F. (1999/2000). Building a new structure for school leadership. *American Educator, 23*(4), 6-13.

Elmore, R., & Burney, D. (1999). Investing in teacher learning: Staff development and instructional improvement. In L. Darling-Hammond and G. Sykes (Eds.), *Teaching as the learning profession: Handbook of policy and practice* (pp. 236-291). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Epstein, J.L., Coates, L., Salinas, K.C., Sanders, M.G., & Simon, B.S. (1997). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Drawing on extensive knowledge and experience, the authors have produced a valuable handbook enabling stakeholders to "organize and implement positive and permanent programs of school, family, and community partnerships." Epstein's research-based six types of involvement are highlighted with sample activities from the field.

Farkas, S., Foley, P., & Duffett, A. (with Foleno, T. & Johnson, J.). (2001). *Just waiting to be asked? A fresh look at attitudes on public engagement*. New York, NY: Public Agenda.

The authors examine what the public and educators want from their involvement in schools and school improvement

efforts—important information for establishing shared involvement and decisionmaking within districts and schools.

Fullan, M. (2001). The new meaning of educational change (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Fullan's updated edition provides even more valuable insights into the complexity of reform and practical ideas for addressing its challenges.

Fullan, M. (with Stiegelbauer, S.). (1991). *The new meaning of educational change* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. & Hargreaves, A. (1996). *What's worth fighting for in your school?* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Fullan and Hargreave offer action guidelines for teachers and principals toward school reform. They examine the supports, mind sets, knowledge bases, and cultures that foster effective reforms.

Giacobbe, A., Osborne, M., & Woods, D. (1998). *The school-home connection: Partnerships supporting student learning.* Washington, DC: American Federation of Teachers.

The AFT's training manual includes a synthesis of research on the history of family involvement in schools, ways to build a family learning environment, communications skills and strategies, homework, and successful school programs and practices in building school-family partnerships.

Goertz, M.E., Floden, R.E., & O'Day, J.A. (1995). *Studies of education reform: Systemic reform* (Vols. 1-3). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

Hall, G.E., & Hord, S.M. (2001). *Implementing change: Patterns, principles, and potholes.* Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Hall and Hord employ their considerable knowledge and experience in examining essential elements of the study of change: its context, tools and techniques for change facilitators, the imperative for leadership in change, and the different realities of change. Discussion questions, fieldwork activities, and other practical tools are provided for interaction and collegial learning.

Henderson, A.T. (1988). Good news: An ecologically balanced approach to academic improvement. *Educational Horizons, 66*(2), 60-62.

Henderson, A.T., & Berla, N. (Eds.). (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement.* Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education.

Henderson and Berla provide a rich collection of research study summaries in evidence of the connections between family involvement in children's education and those children's educational achievement. The title says it all, but the document gives readers the details.

Hill, P.T., Wise, A.E., & Shapiro, L. (1989). *Educational progress: Cities mobilize to improve their schools.* Santa Monica: CA: Rand.

Hord, S.M. (1997). *Professional learning communities: Communities of continuous inquiry and development* (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Hord synthesized the research and provides lessons from her deep understanding of the components of high-performance learning communities.

Hord, S.M. (1992). The new alliance of superintendents and principals: Applying the research to site-based decision making [Electronic version]. *Issues ... about Change, 2*(1). Retrieved January 25, 2002, from http://www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues21.html.

Housman, N.G. & Martinez, M.R. (2001, April). *A brief for practitioners on turning around low-performing schools: Implications at the school, district, and state levels* [Issues brief]. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform.

Huberman, M.A., & Miles, M.B. (1984). *Innovation up close: How school improvement works.* New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Immerwahr, J., & Johnson, J. (1996). *Americans' views on standards: An assessment by Public Agenda*. New York, NY: Public Agenda.

Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL). (2001, February). *Leadership for student learning: Restructuring school district leadership. School leadershiop for the 21st century initiative. A report of the Task Force on School District Leadership*. Washington, DC: Author.

Jacobs, H.H. (1997). *Mapping the big picture: Integrating curriculum and assessment K-12*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Jones, T.G., & Marti, L. (1994, April). *Parents as collaborators in urban school reform*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Joyce, B.R., & Showers, B. (1995). *Student achievement through staff development: Fundamentals of school renewal* (2nd ed.). White Plans, NY: Longman.

Joyce and Showers' strong examination of research and best practices in staff development provides a deeper understanding of staff learning and its connection to student learning.

Lambert, L. (1998). *How to build leadership capacity. Educational Leadership, 55*(7), 17-19.

LaRocque, L., & Coleman, P. (1989). Quality control: School accountability and district ethos. In M. Holmes, K.A. Leithwood, and D. Musella (Eds.), *Educational policy for effective schools* (pp. 168-191). Toronoto, Ontario, Canada: OISE Press.

Lee, V.E., Smith, J.B., & Croninger, R.G. (1995, Fall). Another look at high school restructuring: More evidence that it improves student achievement, and more insight into why. *Issues in Restructuring Schools, 9*, 1-5, 7-10.

Lieberman, A., & Miller, L. (1999). *Teachers: Transforming their world and their work*. New York, NY: Teachers

College Press, & Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Little, J.W. (1990). The persistence of privacy: Autonomy and initiative in teachers' professional relations. *Teachers College Record, 91*(4), 509-536.

Little, J.W. (1982). Norms of collegiality and experimentation: Workplace conditions of school success. *American Educational Research Journal, 19*(3), 325-340.

Maeroff, G.I. (1993). *Team building for school change: Equipping teachers for new roles*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Maslow, A.H. (1965). *Eupsychian management: A journal*. Homewood, IL: R.D. Irwin.

McLaughlin, M.W. & Talbert, J.F. (1993). *Contexts that matter for teaching and learning: Strategic opportunities for meeting the Nation's educational goals*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University, Center for Research on the Context of Secondary School Teaching. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED357023)

Meier, D. (2001). [Quoted material, p.15]. In *An overview of smaller learning communities in high schools*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education. Retrieved January 30, 2002, from http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SLCP/slchighschools_research_09_01.doc

Mohrman, S.A., Wohlstetter, P., & Associates. (1994). *School-based management: Organizing for high performance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Moore, E.K. (1991). Improving schools through parental involvement. *Principal, 71*(1), 17, 19-20.

Morrissey, M.S. (2000). Comprehensive school improvement: Addressing the challenges. *Issues...about Change, 9*(1), 1-9.

Morrissey, M.S., & Cowan, D. (2000, April). *Creating and sustaining a professional learning community: Actions and*

perceptions of leadership. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

National Education Commission on Time and Learning. (1994, April). Prisoners of *time. Washington, DC: Author.*
The commission provides a healthy look at the ways time issues become a barrier to effective education, with insights into what can be done to use time more productively.

National Institute on Educational Governance, Finance, Policymaking, and Management (1998). *What the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) means for systemic school improvement*. Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, US Department of Education, and Consortium for Policy Research in Education. Policy brief developed from TIMSS forum convened in Washington, DC, on October 6–7, 1997. www.ed.gov/pubs/TIMSSBrief/title.html

Newmann, F.M., & Wehlage, G.G. (1997). *Successful school restructuring: A report to the public and educators*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools.
A synthesis of the Center's research findings of data from 1500 elementary, middle and high schools throughout the U.S. and field research in 44 schools in 16 states. The report was prepared for the public and educators.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. (2000). *Aligning and mapping the school curriculum: Workshop planning guide and trainers manual. Onward to Excellence II*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Odden, A. (1998). *Getting better by design: Vol. 2. How to create and manage a decentralized education system*. Arlington, VA: New American Schools.

Pardini, P. (1999). Making time for adult learning. *Journal of Staff Development, 20*(2), 37-41.

Paulu, N. (1988). *Experiences in school improvement: The story of 16 American districts*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of

Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED297480)

Perkins, D.N. (1992). *Smart schools: From training memories to educating minds*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Pollack, S., Chrispeels, J., Watson, D., Brice, R., & McCormick, S. (1988). *A description of district factors that assist in the development of equity schools*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Poplin, M., & Weeres, J. (1992). *Voices from the inside: A report on schooling from inside the classroom*. Claremont, CA: Claremont Graduate School, Institute for Education in Transformation.

Public Agenda Reality Check 2000 [Special Report]. (2000, February 16). *Education Week, 19*(23), S1-S8.

Quellmalz, E., Shields, P.M., & Knapp, M.S. (with Bamburg, J.D., Anderson, L., Hill, L., et al.). (1995). *School-based reform: Lessons from a national study. A guide for school reform teams*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service.

Ravitch, D. (1985). *The schools we deserve: Reflections on the educational crises of our time*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Rosenholtz, S.J. (1989). *Teachers' workplace: The social organization of schools*. New York, NY: Longman.

Royal, M.A., & Rossi, R.J. (1997). *Schools as communities* (ERIC Digest No. 11). Eugene, OR: University of Oregon, ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED405641)

Sammons, P. (1999). *School effectiveness: Coming of age in the 21st century*. Exton, PA: Swets & Zeitlinger.

Sarason, S.B. (1990). *The predictable failure of educational reform: Can we change course before it's too late?* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schlechty, P.C. (1990). *Schools for the 21st century: Leadership imperatives for educational reform*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schmidt, W.H., McKnight, C.C., & Raizen, S.A. (1997). *A splintered vision: An investigation of U.S. science and mathematics education*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic.

Schmidt, W.H., & Wang, H.A. (1999). Gateway to quality U.S. science education: Needed implications of TIMSS findings. *MSTA Journal, 44*(2).

Schmuck, R.A. (1982, March). *The school organization and classroom interaction. Once again: School climate*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, NY.

Seeman, A.N., & Seeman, M. (1976). Staff processes and pupil attitudes: A study of teacher participation in educational change. *Human Relations, 29*(1), 25-40.

Senge, P.M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Senge provides a solid foundation in the purpose, nature, and essential parts of a learning organization, giving invaluable insights into what makes a system work successfully.

Senge, P.M. (Ed.), Cambron-McCabe, N., Lucas, T., Smith, B., Dutton, J., & Kleiner, A. (2000). *Schools that learn: A fifth discipline fieldbook for educators, parents, and everyone who cares about education*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Sheldon, K.M., Elliot, A.J., Kim, Y., & Kasser, T. (2001). What is satisfying about satisfying events? Testing 10 candidate psychological needs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 80*(2), 325-339.

Smith, S.C., & Scott, J.J. (1990). *The collaborative school: A work environment for effective instruction*. Eugene, OR: University of Oregon, ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED316918)

Stigler, J.W., & Hiebert, J. (1999). *The teaching gap: Best ideas from the world's teachers for improving education in the classroom*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Stigler and Hiebert provide a powerful look at the gap between successful classroom instruction, and what is being done in most American schools—the case of American departures from what research shows to be most effective. They include research findings and descriptions of lesson study and other practices that can help improve teaching in America.

Stringfield, S. (1998). Organizational learning and current reform efforts. In K. Leithwood and K.S. Louis (Eds.), *Schools as learning communities* (pp. 255-268). Exton, PA: Swets & Zeitlinger.

Stringfield, S. (1995). Attempts to enhance students' learning: A search for valid programs and highly reliable implementation techniques. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 6*(1), 67-96.

Swick, K.J. (1992). *Teacher-parent partnerships* [ERIC Digest]. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. Retrieved January 29, 2002, from http://npin.org/library/pre1998/n00381/n00381.html

Tyack, D. (1990). 'Restructuring' in historical perspective: Tinkering toward utopia. *Teachers College Record, 92*(2), 170-191.

Wilson, R.B., & Schmoker, M. (1992). Quest for quality. *Executive Educator, 14*(1), 18-22.

Woods, D.G. (2000). The effects of social context on student achievement. In *Foundations of effective teaching II: Delivering effective instruction* (pp. 1-29). Washington, DC: American Federation of Teachers.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A Collection of Some of the

Best Tools for Moving Forward

Foreword

Research and Practice: An Important Collaboration ..... Toolbox iii

I. Establishing Roles and Relationships Between School and District Staffs and the Larger Community

Checklist for Action ..... Toolbox 2
Case Studies ..... Toolbox 4
Tips for Purposeful Participatory Process for Partnerships ..... Toolbox 5
Dialogue ..... Toolbox 7
Resources ..... Toolbox 10

II. Enabling Shared Decisionmaking

Checklist for Action ..... Toolbox 14
Case Studies ..... Toolbox 16
Effective Professional Development ..... Toolbox 17
National Staff Development Council Standards for Staff Development ..... Toolbox 20
Resources ..... Toolbox 22

III. Getting Focused and Building Coherency

Checklist for Action ..... Toolbox 24
Case Studies ..... Toolbox 26
Checklist for Creating and Using a School Profile ..... Toolbox 27
Nine CSRD Components ..... Toolbox 28
Indicators for School Readiness for Reform ..... Toolbox 30
Profile Development Samples ..... Toolbox 33
Resources ..... Toolbox 42

IV. Finding Time for Adult Learning, Planning, and Collaborative Work–Supporting Professional Learning Communities

Checklist for Action ..... Toolbox 44
Case Studies ..... Toolbox 46

Some Ideas for Finding Time for Adult Work ..... Toolbox 48
The Lesson Study Process ..... Toolbox 49
Structured Reflection Protocol ..... Toolbox 53
Resources ..... Toolbox 54

V. Growing Leaders

Checklist for Action ..... Toolbox 56
Case Studies ..... Toolbox 58
Learning To Lead, Leading To Learn ..... Toolbox 59
Examples From the Field ..... Toolbox 60
Teachers as Leaders ..... Toolbox 62
Recommendations for Schools, Networks, and Districts ..... Toolbox 63
Key Work of School Boards ..... Toolbox 64
Resources ..... Toolbox 65

A Closing Thought To Hold During the Struggles of Change ..... Toolbox 67

Because education's professional knowledge base grows almost daily, these toolbox items are intended to serve simply to open the door to the fine resources that are available. One item should serve as a lead to others, which will in turn reveal trails to other sources. Also remember that none of these chapters should be viewed in isolation from the others—the information is interrelated and interdependent. Readers are encouraged to engage continuously in a search for the best that is known, and to share what they find with others who share their vision for quality schools for all students.

Foreword

Research and Practice: An Important Collaboration

In a field now rich with research, theory, and what practitioners term "best practices," the deep interest practitioners and other stakeholders have in school improvement raises an important caution to attend to, before actions are taken. Because our actions affect the lives of children and the good health of the society in which they live and grow, it is especially important that we be aware of the nature and quality of the tools available to us, and make informed decisions as we select those tools. That means we must also be informed about the nature and quality of research available to us, and about its potential for helping us realize our goals through our practices.

Practitioners should note the value of science-based research in constructing "an accurate (that is, reliable, consistent and non-arbitrary) representation of the world," and in minimizing the "influence of bias or prejudice in the experimenter when testing an hypothesis or a theory" (Wolfs, n.d.). Wolfs describes four steps to the science-based method:

1. Observation and description of a phenomenon or group of phenomena
2. Formulation of an hypothesis to explain the phenomena
3. Use of the hypothesis to predict the existence of other phenomena, or to predict quantitatively the results of new observations
4. Performance of experimental tests of the predictions by several independent experimenters and properly performed experiments

Examining the role of science-based research in school improvement, Grossen (n.d.) writes that:

> "To improve the results achieved by schools, the instructional practices that are shared widely across the profession should be limited to those that are most likely to produce better results. Scientific research is the best method for predicting the results that different practices are likely to produce. This research allows predictions for a larger group of children

"Just as we seek answers to life's larger questions, we seek answers within the frames of our professional existence.... As teachers and administrators, we seek answers to the questions about the nature of knowledge, the nature of learning, and the nature of teaching."

—Ellis & Fouts, 1997

based on how something works with smaller samples of children. Those procedures that get better results across a number of teachers and across students are the ones that are worth sharing and only these belong in the shared professional knowledge base of teaching. Those procedures that are not expected to work for more than one teacher or more than one student need not be shared and should not go into the professional knowledge base. A professional knowledge base developed through scientific research is a science; it contains instructional procedures that work well across the profession. A knowledge base developed any other way is known as quackery, dogma, superstition, and so forth."

In their extensive examination of research and of the research bases underlying various innovations in education, Ellis and Fouts (1997) note that what is new, or innovative, is extremely attractive, and that "School people often express a desire to be on the 'cutting edge' of things, to know the latest trends, to avoid being old-fashioned or out-of-date." When something is identified as being "research-based," they contend, it lends "almost mystical qualities" to that program or practice. However, as stakeholders work to build their knowledge and skill base in the school improvement process so as to inform decisionmaking and professional practice, the distinction between levels of research become significant. These levels can help build understanding of why research should be regarded as descriptive rather than prescriptive, and why it is important to find out which level of research it is we use, before making educational decisions. To assist in discerning the nature and quality of education innovations, Ellis and Fouts describe three levels of research.

Level I: Basic or pure research on learning and behavior

This level is "most commonly conducted in experimental or laboratory settings by psychologists, learning theorists, linguists, and others." The general purpose of such studies is to develop a theory or idea "having some validity." Level I research can be used as a foundation for curriculum development, Ellis and Fouts contend, but not to answer what are termed "applied educational questions" directly. As an example, Ellis and Fouts cite Piaget's theory that most eight-year-olds are at a stage of operating concretely. As a result of this theory, a number of educators have developed or employ manipulatives in mathematics lessons. In order to learn something about the effectiveness of lessons using manipulatives, Level II research must be done.

Level II: Studies whose purpose is to determine the efficacy of particular programs or instructional methods in educational settings

Researchers wanting to do Level II studies would try to set up controlled conditions in several classrooms to focus on a specific educational component like cooperative learning. Ellis and Fouts describe Level II as applied research because:

1. It is conducted in the same or similar settings as those that are actually found in schools
2. It makes no attempt to develop a theory,

but rather attempts to make instructional or curricular applications of a given theory

Educators will find Level II research helpful in learning which programs or practices are most likely to be effective in fulfilling their intended purpose. As one of the best sources for this level, Ellis and Fouts recommend the American Educational Research Association's journal, *Review of Educational Research*. They add a reminder in their examination of Level II research, however, that it is unwise to assume that what is successful in one setting will be successful in a different setting:

> "...each study, even if it represents good research, is severely limited in its generalizability.... This is why large numbers of good investigations about a given program should be carried out before school districts jump on this or that bandwagon."

Level III: Evaluation research designed to determine the efficacy of programs at the level of school or district implementation

While theory may be supported adequately at Levels I and II, Level III research is needed to determine whether large-scale implementation will be successful, Ellis and Fouts note. At Level II, a program that the research finds very effective may have been implemented by only the most supportive, highly trained teachers. At Level III, researchers may find the same program proved to be relatively ineffective because its implementers included a less supportive cadre of teachers who had less training than those involved during the Level II research. According to Ellis and Fouts, Level III research reveals in greater detail the factors that are involved in successful programs: "The availability of strategic and tactical support in the form of administrative and inservice leadership, as well as parental reaction, also represent factors which become known only over time," which is why Level III research or program evaluation is crucial.

For anyone considering adoption of programs or practices for school improvement, Ellis and Fouts list three sets of questions for stakeholders to ask in their considerations:

1. What is the theoretical basis of the proposed program? How sound is that theoretical base?
2. What is the nature of the research done to document the validity of the proposed program? What is the quantity and quality of the research done in classroom settings?
3. Is there evidence of large-scale implementation program evaluation? What comparisons were made with "traditional" forms? How realistic was the evaluation? What was the duration? What was the setting?

Ellis and Fouts stress that requiring so many "gates" before accepting educational programs or practices wholesale may seem problematic, but that such a requirement might lessen education's too-familiar susceptibility to fads. Stakeholders need to inform themselves fully during the decision-making process, because "the only way to improve educational practice is to approach educational innovation with such a deliberate, measured sense of its worth" (Ellis & Fouts, 1997).

Sources:

Ellis, A.K., & Fouts, J.T. 1997. *Research on educational innovations*, 2nd ed. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Grossen, B. *What does it mean to be a research-based profession?* University of Oregon, Eugene. http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~bgrossen/resprf.htm.

Wolfs, F. "Appendix E: Introduction to the scientific method." University of Rochester, N.Y. http://teacher.nsrl.rochester.edu/phy_labs/AppendixE/AppendixE.html. nd.

Moving Forward Tool Box

I. Establishing Roles and Relationships
Between School and District Staffs and the Larger Community

These resources identify tools for the process of establishing roles and relationships, as well as information that can be used as tools for dialogue. Stakeholders must learn the knowledge and skills of the process of collaboration as well the research and best practices that constitute effective school improvement.

Roles and Relationships—Checklist for Action

The following checklist is to be used as a guide, adapted as needed to your situation. Items listed here may not be sequential.

Actions	Checked
All stakeholder groups have been identified, and that information is easily accessible to all stakeholders.	❑
Representatives from **stakeholder groups meet regularly** to:	
• Assess the district's current situation, using data to inform themselves	❑
• Discuss district and school needs	❑
• Work toward agreement, development, and adoption of a vision and goals for educational improvement in the district	❑
• Monitor the progress and process of school and district improvement implementation plans	❑
Systems of interactive meetings and training have been established at the district levels to **enable stakeholders to get to know each other**, continue learning about each other, and work effectively together. These systems, like all others, are monitored for levels of success and adjusted as needed.	❑
Stakeholders demonstrate a **sense of equality** with each other in the collaborative process of improving schools. Surveys and other assessment tools show that stakeholders feel:	
• Informed	❑
• As if their opinions were important to other stakeholders	❑
Stakeholders have established **agreement on the following:**	
• The need for school improvement	❑
• The value of a knowledge of research, best practices, and quality education theory	❑
• The value of adult work (planning, learning, etc.) outside the classroom	❑
• The need for school autonomy and site-based decisionmaking	❑
Research, best practices, and quality education theory are being shared and discussed by stakeholders.	❑

Roles and Relationships—Checklist for Action (continued)

The following checklist is to be used as a guide, adapted as needed to your situation. Items listed here may not be sequential.

Actions	Checked
Options and plans for **two-way communication** between stakeholder groups have been identified and implemented.	❑
District and school **profiling** information has been collected and the information organized in useful ways for stakeholders as they work toward district and school goals.	❑
Monitoring structures have been established to monitor district progress toward district goals, and school progress toward school goals. Monitoring includes use of tools such as surveys and focus groups to determine the progress on building relationships, depth and breadth of understanding of issues, and research; two-way communications processes; stakeholder satisfaction in their involvement in the process; agreement on goals and implementation plans, etc. Monitoring plans also include reporting progress to stakeholders and provision for improvement.	❑
Stakeholders identify and establish systems to **reward excellence** and promote **effective collaboration and lifelong learning:**	
• At the district level	❑
• At the school level	❑
The district provides external support to schools in the form of:	
• Leadership backing and stability	❑
• Resources necessary for implementation of schools' improvement plans	❑
• Structures for enabling school autonomy	❑
• Trusting, cooperative attitudes toward schools' improvement efforts	❑

Roles and Relationships—Case Studies

Excerpts from *Profiles of Progress: What Works in Northwest Title I Schools* (NWREL)

These are examples of various concepts and practices in roles and relationships that can be adapted to all grade levels. They represent only a very small example of what is being practiced in schools and districts across the nation, which stakeholders can locate in their own searches. Elsewhere in this Toolbox are other examples from these schools that, although in different categories, also relate to the concerns in the category of Roles and Relationships.

Bryant Elementary (Montana)

Another successful program the school retained was a "looping track" for the first and second grades, allowing teachers to stay with the same class for two years. This has significantly cut down on "getting to know each other" time for teachers, parents, and students, and has allowed teachers to focus on each student's individual learning style.... Parent and community involvement was another goal identified in the needs assessment. A parent involvement program specifically targeted for kindergarten and first grade was piloted, and a parent center with books and videos was developed (pp. 30–31).

Sacajawea Elementary (Idaho)

Encouraging as much parent participation as possible, Sacajawea holds an open house where all programs are explained to parents. They learn about the Title I program and how their children can benefit from extra help. Parents are always invited to visit in the classroom, volunteer to help, or participate in individual reading times. They are invited to schoolwide improvement meetings and are asked for input through surveys that are later looked over by faculty and administrators. The schoolwide improvement committee continues to meet monthly to listen to parent ideas and feedback. Their feedback is taken seriously and plays a huge role in planning the future of Sacajawea Elementary (p. 19).

Pablo Elementary (Montana)

Celebrations of success are important to the school culture. Pablo invites the entire community to the schoolwide attendance celebrations. During the "May Attendance Blitz," in which the 95 percent attendance goal was promoted, there were daily visits by the family support teams to cheer the classes on, banners and signs posted announcing attendance records for the day, and award presentations in an all-school assembly (p. 37).

Glacier Valley Elementary (Alaska)

Engaging the public, especially families, has been a major success...." Parents are not afraid to come in the door now," [the principal] says. The school hired a parent, Veronica Whitehead, to be a parent-volunteer coordinator. She coordinates the school newsletter development, truly a newsletter by and for the children, as well as parents. The school's Web site has a form with which parents, students, and teachers can submit ideas for stories. Parents, volunteers, paraeducators, and teachers meet in the teachers' lounge to eat, share, and work together... A major success in involving parents has been the Art Tuesday classes taught by parent volunteers every week.... Parents are not only welcomed as educators, they are empowered to act as professionals (pp. 8–10).

Roles and Relationships– Tips for Purposeful Participatory Process for Partnerships

Source: *Making Collaborations Successful*, Child and Family Program, NWREL www.nwrel.org/cfc/frc/collabtips1.html.

Ingredients of participatory, interactive meetings

- ❑ Goals need a focused content and outcomes
- ❑ Early and complete involvement of participants in activities is necessary so they can relate to concepts and ideas being presented
- ❑ Choices are important, they allow people the opportunity to take initiative and responsibility for themselves
- ❑ Successes need to be officially recognized so people come away with a feeling of appreciation for their own strengths and abilities
- ❑ Opportunities to work together help people draw support from each other
- ❑ People need the chance to share, modify their ideas, define problems, and create solutions together

How Adults Learn

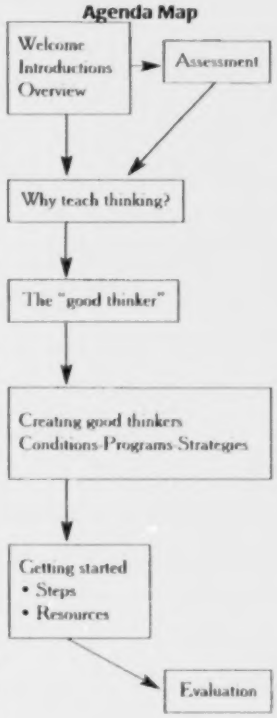
- ❑ Adults learn by doing
- ❑ Adults come with a wealth of life experiences, values, world views and learning styles
- ❑ Adults are task-oriented in their approach to work
- ❑ Adults need to play with their learning

Learning needs to be meaningful for a student to translate it into everyday life. Partnerships are like people—they come in all shapes, sizes, and configurations. Because of this diversity we need to be careful about how we teach/share concepts with each other. For some adults activities make them feel foolish and are time wasters. It is important that people feel included in an activity, that they have power over the outcome and have the time to relax and enjoy the interaction with another person. These activities are meant to be tools for inclusion and ways to organize content and move process forward. Agenda maps are useful tools for meetings working as connectors between activities, content, and purpose. As organizing tools, they help with communication allowing participants to see the plan of the meeting, connections between segments, and are useful for note taking. They help adults participate. See the samples to the right.

Agenda Diagrams

(modified from the original document)

Agenda Map



Agenda

9:00	Welcome Introductions Overview
9:45	Why each thinking
10:30	The "good thinker"
12:45	Lunch Break Creating good thinkers: Conditions-Programs- Strategies
1:15	Pooling our expertise
3:15	Getting started
4:00	Debrief training design
4:15	Reflection and evaluation

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Roles and Relationships—
Tips for Purposeful Participatory Process for Partnerships

Source: *Making Collaborations Successful*, Child and Family Program, NWREL

Success Activities

Organization is a key to survival in the everyday whirlwind of collaborating—so much to do in so little time. Included here are some quick organizational activities which serve that purpose. (See the original document, available online at www.nwrel.org/cfc/frc/collabtips1.html) Work never seems like work when it is disguised as an activity. Above all, share laughter with each other, it goes a long way in relieving daily stress.

- ❑ Make sure you have all the materials you will need for the activities you have planned at hand.
- ❑ Develop your agenda so it can be shared ahead of time with the participants and they understand that built-in activities serve a purpose for the whole group.
- ❑ Remind the participants that their enthusiastic participation is essential. Sharing their expertise and experience is critical to the success of the meeting.
- ❑ Listen carefully and respectfully, acknowledge what people say even if you don't agree.
- ❑ Use a timekeeper to stay on track; time is a valued commodity for all the membership, don't waste it.

Introductions should be included in each meeting of the partnership. It gives people a chance to talk about themselves, maybe diffuse their busy day, and make connections. It doesn't have to take a long time and it helps people settle into the routine of a meeting.

Roles and Relationships—Dialogue

Source: NW Regional Educational Laboratory, www.nwrel.org/scpd/scc/natspec/todialog.shtml

Dialogue enhances our capacity for common understanding and mutual support, but conducting dialogue requires skill development. We introduce this concept because building these skills is an important part of a learning community.

Dialogue is not a tight, structured methodology that can be reduced to a clearly defined recipe. In fact, it may be the informal, spontaneous nature of dialogue which contributes to its effectiveness in developing common ground and collective understanding. Brown (1997) views dialogue as a way to "build mental, spiritual and interpersonal muscle with power in our lives and in our organizations. Dialogue builds this power, not overnight, but over time and that muscle develops differently in different people."

Guidelines for Successful Dialogue

Listen

- ❑ Without thinking about how you will respond
- ❑ To hear the emotion behind the words
- ❑ As part of a community, seeing yourself as part of a collective
- ❑ Check to see if you are listening only for confirmation of your own viewpoints

Think before you speak

- ❑ Dig deep to see what you wonder about
- ❑ Talk to yourself asking "Where am I on this issue now?"
- ❑ Suspend your assumptions and consider if others' assumptions might be just as useful
- ❑ Recognize that others are trying to be helpful in their own way

Speak

- ❑ From the heart
- ❑ Be in the moment
- ❑ From personal experience
- ❑ Allow for silence; allow others time to think and consider new ideas

"By listening deeply and taking in the others' meaning, we risk being changed by what we hear. In this sense, listening is a radical act. The willingness to allow this process to unfold gives dialogue its transformative power."

Roles and Relationships—Dialogue (continued)

Source: NW Regional Educational Laboratory, www.nwrel.org/scpd/scc/natspec/todialog.shtml

Take time to:

- ❑ Let ideas build upon each other; don't force them to link logically to one another
- ❑ Allow others' viewpoints to sharpen your own understanding
- ❑ Observe; notice what you notice, and what meaning you make of what you see
- ❑ Honor different opinions
- ❑ Resist a rush toward conclusions
- ❑ Talk slowly when you are struggling with important ideas

Information about dialogues and how to conduct them successfully is available from a wide variety of sources. The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory has published *Talking Community: The Dialogue Workbook*, available online from the NWREL Web site. On the following page are some excerpts from that document.

"Dialogue may serve different purposes depending on the context and participants' expectations."

—p. 14

Roles and Relationships—Dialogue *(continued)*

The Purpose Served by Different Types of Dialogue

Purpose	Relationship-Knowledge Structure	Role of Participant	Type of Dialogue
Build understanding and relations	Inclusive-divergent	Equal status, reciprocal roles	Conversation
Solve problems	Inclusive-divergent	Same	Inquiry
Understand different arguments and positions	Critical-divergent	Same	Debate
Conceptual growth of novice	Critical-divergent	Unequal, expert, and novice	Instruction

Conflict Resolution Sites

Source: National Resource Center for Safe Schools (NRCSS)
101 SW Main, Suite 500, Portland, OR 97204
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Center for Dispute Settlement, Inc.
The Center for Dispute Settlement, Inc. works to resolve disputes through alternative dispute resolution processes such as conciliation, mediation, and arbitration by volunteers, consultants, and the professional staff trained by the center.
300 State Street, Suite 301
Rochester, NY 14614
Phone: (716) 546-5110
Fax: (716) 546-4391
E-mail: andrew@cdsadr.org
Web site: http://www.cdsadr.org

Conflict Resolution Education Network (CREnet) National Institute for Dispute Resolution
CREnet is the primary national and international clearinghouse for information, resources, and technical assistance in the field of conflict resolution and education. It continues to promote the development, implementation, and institutionalization of school and university-based conflict resolution programs and curricula.
http://www.crenet.org

Conflict Resolution Programs in Schools
(ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education Digest)
http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu/digests/dig74.html

Cooperation, Conflict Resolution, and School Violence: A Systems Approach
http://iume.tc.columbia.edu/choices/briefs/choices05.html

Cooperative Learning Center
The Cooperative Learning Center is a Research and Training Center focusing on how students should interact with each other as they learn and the skills needed to interact effectively.
60 Peik Hall
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Phone: (612) 624-7031
Fax: (612) 626-1395
E-mail: qanda@cooplearn.org
Web site: http://www.clcrc.com

CRU Institute
The CRU Institute is a nonprofit organization created for the purpose of teaching mediation concepts and skills to youth and adults.
845 106th Ave. NE, Suite 109
Bellevue, WA 98004
Phone: (425) 451-4015
E-mail: cru@cruinstitute.org
Web site: http://www.cruinstitute.org

Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR)
ESR is a leading source of innovative curriculum materials and teacher training programs that focus on issues of peacemaking and conflict resolution.
23 Garden Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Phone: (617) 492-1764
E-mail: educators@esrnational.org
Web site: http://www.esrnational.org

Implementing a Peer Mediation Program: CREnet Fact Sheet
CREnet
1527 New Hampshire Avenue, NW,
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: (202) 667-9700
Fax: (202) 667-8629
E-mail: membership@crenet.org
Web site:
http://www.crenet.org/Research/peer.htm

National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM)
NAFCM is a membership organization composed of community mediation centers, their staff and volunteer mediators, and other individuals and organizations interested in the community mediation movement.
1527 New Hampshire Avenue, NW,
Washington, DC 20036-1206
Phone: (202) 667-9700
Fax: (202) 667-8629
E-mail: nafcm@nafcm.org
Web site: http://www.nafcm.org

Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management
The Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management provides Ohioans with constructive, non-violent forums, processes, and techniques for resolving disputes.
Riffe Center, 77 South High Street, 24th Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43266-0124
Phone: (614) 752-9595
Fax: (614) 752-9682
E-mail: cdr_website@ohio.gov
Web site: http://www.state.oh.us/cdr

The National Center for Conflict Resolution Education
The National Center for Conflict Resolution Education provides training and technical assistance nationwide to advance the development of conflict resolution education programs in schools, juvenile justice settings and youth service organizations, and community partnership programs.
Illinois Bar Center, 424 S. Second Street, Springfield, IL 62701
Phone: (217) 523-7056
Fax: (217) 523-7066
E-mail: info@nccre.org
Web site: http://www.nccre.org

Western Justice Center Foundation
Based in Pasadena, CA, this nonprofit collaborates with other organizations to develop, replicate, and evaluate innovative models of conflict resolution in the regional, national, and international spheres. The Center maintains an online database of professional associations, educational institutions and nonprofit organizations that provide training and resources in intergroup dialogue, community-based mediation, and other conflict resolution skills.
85 South Grand Avenue, Pasadena, California 91105
Phone: (626) 584-7494
Fax: (626) 568-8223
E-mail: info@westernjustice.org
Web site: http://www.westernjustice.org

Reform Information

Following are some of the many sources that can be helpful in providing general information about comprehensive reform. As questions arise during the process of identifying and building roles and relationships, the information available from and through these sites may help stakeholders answer some of those questions, as well as anticipate next steps in the school improvement process. The search itself is an important part of the process. As stakeholders establish roles and relationships around knowledge- and skill-building, information from these sites and others may help focus some of the dialogue and build a foundation of shared knowledge.

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)
Information on site-based management is available from this site, including lessons for school reform teams, pathways to site-based management in schools, plans for site-based management through shared decisionmaking, a guide for site-based decisionmaking, and links to other sites for further resources.
www.mcrel.org

National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform
A government-supported (OERI) Web site that provides access to the most recent research and evaluation of reform, designs, models, and strategies. It also provides access to information about the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program and resources, including contact information for agencies and organizations involved in assisting states, local districts, and schools engaging in reform efforts.
www.goodschools.gwu.edu
Web site: www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/compreform (CSRD information)

New American Schools
Several publications featuring research findings related to school improvement may be downloaded from the NAS site. Links to other organizations and publications are also available. Some of the issues addressed are those of scheduling, resource allocation, and professional development, which can help stakeholders find time for building roles and relationships.
1560 Wilson Blvd. Suite 901
Arlington, VA 22209
703-908-9500
Web site: www.naschools.org

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
NWREL's Web site has both downloadable resources and links to other sources helpful to stakeholders, as do other Regional Educational Laboratories. (See www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/compreform/labs.html for a complete list.)
101 SW Main, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204
503-275-9500
Web site: www.nwrel.org

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
SEDL has done extensive work in examining professional learning communities.
211 East Seventh Street (Second Floor)
Austin, Texas 78701-3281
Web site: www.sedl.org

II. Enabling Shared Decisionmaking

Foundational to learning the process and components of shared decisionmaking is the use of the most effective processes for training and professional development. Shared decisionmaking requires training and involves shared knowledge among all stakeholders. As with the development of roles and relationships among stakeholders, successful shared decisionmaking depends on proficiency in both the process and the content (including challenges and their solutions) addressed by the process.

Enabling Shared Decisionmaking—Checklist for Action

The following checklist is to be used as a guide, adapted as needed to your situation. Items listed here may not be sequential.

Actions	Checked
The district and its schools have set as one of their goals the development of **a culture that fosters autonomy, competence, and interrelatedness** among its stakeholders, using means that are founded in research.	❑
To help meet the goal of a culture that fosters autonomy, competence, and interrelatedness, the district and its schools have provided **training for stakeholders** in	
• The structures and processes of shared decisionmaking	❑
• The knowledge base essential for informed decisionmaking and the successful execution of their responsibilities within the process	❑
The district and its schools in collaboration with their communities have:	
• Established **structures for shared decisionmaking**	❑
• Communicated these structures to stakeholders in ways that ensure their ability to use them effectively	❑
The district and its schools have a system in place for **remaining current in state-of-the-art research and education theory**, and the application of that knowledge is evident in the structures of shared decisionmaking and in school and classroom practice.	❑
The district provides the **supports necessary for its schools' successful implementation of shared decisionmaking**, including but not limited to:	
• Funding for time, personnel, and other necessary resources such as Internet access for networking, books, etc.	❑
• Professional development	❑
• Training for community members outside school staffs	❑
• Policies that support shared decisionmaking	❑
• Two-way communications	❑
• Democratic, collaborative management style	❑

Enabling Shared Decisionmaking—Checklist for Action *(continued)*

The following checklist is to be used as a guide, adapted as needed to your situation. Items listed here may not be sequential.

Actions	Checked
Schools demonstrate research-based features of successful schools that include but are not limited to:	
• Shared knowledge among stakeholders to enable shared decisionmaking for governance and to provide informed decisions both in and out of the classroom for instruction and curriculum	❑
• Structures that encourage and enable lifelong learning for all stakeholders	❑
• Interdependent work structures such as teaching teams	❑
• Parent/family involvement in a broad range of school affairs	❑
• Small school size, or some configuration that achieves its effects in increased opportunities for communication and trust	❑
School staffs assume **responsibilities for shared decisionmaking** within teams that engage in the following or related activities:	
• Focus on a shared group of students and their needs	❑
• Plan curriculum	❑
• Plan and implement professional development	❑
• Address parent and family involvement issues	❑
• Serve on a schoolwide school improvement coordinating council	❑
• Serve in study groups for school improvement plan development	❑

Enabling Shared Decisionmaking—Case Studies

Excerpts from *Profiles of Progress: What Works in Northwest Title I Schools* (NWREL)

These are very brief examples of various concepts and practices that can be adapted to all grade levels.

Portsmouth Middle School (Oregon)

Another example of Portsmouth's alignment toward goals is the school's approach to professional development. [The principal] asked the district to provide resources, and to hold him accountable for results, but to allow the school a greater flexibility than normal. Rather than attend scheduled district training sessions, Portsmouth has frequently used district money for school-specific training that addresses their needs more directly. In the same spirit, the school has eliminated several programs, including some pull-out programs, that could not demonstrate data-proven results, or show how they aligned with the over-all goals. They have also redesigned their report card to be aligned with content standards, restructured the school year into a quarterly system that allows for more frequent assessments, and given teachers a larger role in determining what works and what doesn't. "You've got to trust your teachers' professional judgment," [the principal] says....The staff at Portsmouth has proved equal to the task, taking greater responsibility for curriculum decisions and being open to change whenever the data show it is necessary (pp. 27–29).

Pablo School (Montana)

A building-level leadership team was formed to begin the schoolwide planning process. The "BLT" represented professional and paraprofessional staff members, parents, and community members as well as the principal. The team led the entire school staff in conducting a comprehensive needs assessment. Committees were formed to collect data on student achievement, school climate, curriculum and instruction, and parental involvement. The committees presented their findings at a public meeting and obtained feedback. Strategic planning participants and the building leadership team wrote needs statements based on these data.... After visiting school sites and asking questions about school climate, student achievement, and attendance, the team took the information back to the elementary staff. Several models were researched, and the entire staff voted on which model to implement.... Parents play a big part in their students reaching achievement goals.... Parents receive training so they can help their children complete homework (pp. 34–36).

Bryant Elementary (Montana)

One example [of team planning and focus] is the Home-School Community team, which worked to increase parent involvement by developing an after-school "Homework Help Time," "Lunch and Learn activities," parent education classes, and increased summer enhancement programs.

Grant Elementary (Washington)

From this schoolwide planning process came the idea that the entire staff could take part in the decisionmaking process. The principal and staff categorized what kinds of decisions are continually made, which decisions the principal should make, and which decisions the staff should make. Committees have been formed in the areas of instructions, technology, behavior, equity, and parent involvement. Each committee researches and develops programs in its area of expertise. Proposals are then presented to the entire staff for a consensus vote. A 75 percent majority vote is required to put any idea into action. The principal has encouraged teacher collaboration while providing teachers with flexibility to do what they think is best for their students. Teachers meet regularly to discuss the best methods of teaching, while each individual teacher fine tunes his or her teaching style to fit each class (pp. 40–41).

Enabling Shared Decisionmaking—Effective Professional Development

Effective Professional Development Does the Following:

- ❑ Focuses on teachers as central to student learning, yet includes all other members of the school community
- ❑ Focuses on individual, collegial, and organizational improvement
- ❑ Respects and nurtures the intellectual and leadership capacity of teachers, principals, and others in the school community
- ❑ Reflects best available research and practice in teaching, learning, and leadership
- ❑ Enables teachers to develop further experience in subject content, teaching strategies, uses of technologies, and other essential elements in teaching to high standards
- ❑ Promotes continuous inquiry and improvement embedded in the daily life of schools
- ❑ Is planned collaboratively by those who will participate in and facilitate that development
- ❑ Requires substantial time and other resources
- ❑ Is driven by a coherent long-term plan
- ❑ Is evaluated ultimately on its impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning, and this assessment guides subsequent professional development efforts

Source: U.S. Department of Education (summary)

Research Findings

The list to the left should serve as a guide for the selection and development of professional development offerings for school and district staff as well as other stakeholders in the process of building the knowledge base and skills necessary to successful shared decisionmaking.

Enabling Shared Decisionmaking—Effective Professional Development (continued)

Summary: Effective professional development is:

- ❑ Experiential, engaging teachers in concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, and observation that illuminate the processes of learning and development
- ❑ Grounded in participants' questions, inquiry, and experimentation as well as profession-wide research
- ❑ Collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge among educators
- ❑ Connected to and derived from teachers' work with their students, as well as to examinations of subject matter and teaching methods
- ❑ Sustained and intensive, supported by modeling, coaching, and problem-solving around specific problems of practice
- ❑ Connected to other aspects of school change

"You cannot have students as continuous learners and effective collaborators, without teachers having the same characteristics."

—Fullan, 1993

Source: *Doing What Matters Most: Investing in Quality Teaching*
The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1997

Enabling Shared Decisionmaking– Effective Professional Development (continued)

Summary: A Basic List of What Teachers Need To Know and Be Able To Do

- ❑ Conceptual knowledge of subject matter
- ❑ Knowledge about children's cognitive, social, and personal development
- ❑ Understanding of learning and motivation
- ❑ Appreciation for the diversity of children's experiences and approaches to learning and knowledge of varied teaching strategies to address them
- ❑ Skill in using collaborative learning techniques, new curriculum tools and technologies, and sophisticated assessments of learning
- ❑ The capacity to work collectively and reflect on practice with other teachers

—Darling-Hammond, 1997

TO DO–

Ensure that all professional development fits the research-based guidelines for adult learning.

Enabling Shared Decisionmaking– National Staff Development Council Standards for Staff Development

(Revised, 2001)

Context Standards

Staff development that improves the learning of all students:

- ❑ Organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district (Learning Communities)
- ❑ Requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement (Leadership)
- ❑ Requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration (Resources)

Content Standards

Staff development that improves the learning of all students:

- ❑ Prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly, and supportive learning environments, and hold high expectations for their academic achievement (Equity)
- ❑ Deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately (Quality Teaching)
- ❑ Provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately (Family Involvement)

Process Standards

Staff development that improves the learning of all students:

- ❑ Uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement (Data-Driven)
- ❑ Uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact (Evaluation)
- ❑ Prepares educators to apply research to decisionmaking (Research-Based)
- ❑ Uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal (Design)
- ❑ Applies knowledge about human learning and change (Learning)
- ❑ Provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate (Collaboration)

Enabling Shared Decisionmaking–Using the NSDC Standards for Staff Development

State departments of education should:

- ❑ Require that school districts describe how they are using the standards when they request funding for any program that includes staff development
- ❑ Audit staff development in schools not meeting student needs to align staff development practice with what we know improves teaching quality

School systems should:

- ❑ Offer schools incentives to reconfigure their day to support the organization of a learning community and learning teams
- ❑ Align all district plans that have staff development components, including individual growth plans, school improvement plans, and district plans

Schools should:

- ❑ Conduct a professional development needs assessment and decide what will improve staff development in the school (see www.nsdc.org/assessment.pdf or the *Standards Study Guide*)
- ❑ Study each standard and prepare a key question associated with each. Post the questions and refer to them whenever staff development–related issues are considered in meetings throughout the school year

Source: www.nsdc.org

Reprinted with permission of the National Staff Development Council, 2002. All rights reserved.

Standards don't implement themselves. While adopting the standards is a step toward improved learning for teachers–and subsequently their students–it is up to us to carry out the standards every day. Different groups can move beyond rhetoric with these suggestions.

Enabling Shared Decisionmaking– Resources

Following are some resources that can build stakeholder knowledge bases in establishing shared decisionmaking at their sites. These sites can lead stakeholders to additional resources, as any good search reveals unanticipated treasures.

School-based Management, Decentralization, Systemic Reform

A collection of resource links at http://users.ids.net/~brim/ref04.html, including but not limited to the following:

- School Improvement Through Teacher Decisionmaking—Fitzgerald/NWREL
- School-Based Management—Cotton/NWREL
- McREL
- SBM in Hawaii
- Edweek: School-Based Management
- Review of SBM in the Literature—Arterbury/Hord for SEDL
- Guide for School Reform Teams—Lessons from a National Study—SRI
- SBM: Strategies for Success—Wohlstetter and Mohrmann
- The Decentralization Mirage—Rand
- The SBM Guide for Practitioners—JMcKenzie
- Guide for School Reform Teams—USDOE
- SBM—Pathways (Examples include Chicago, Minneapolis, and Milwaukee)
- Decentralization—McREL
- Work Teams in Schools—Oswald/ERIC
- Facilitative Leadership–Lashway/ERIC
- Systemic Reform—Thompson/ERIC
- School Site Councils—Peterson/ERIC
- SDM—Liontos/ERIC
- Systemic reforms—USDOE

Center on Families, Communities, Schools & Children's Learning
The Johns Hopkins University
3505 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218
www.csos.jhu.edu

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)
2550 S. Parker Rd., Suite 500
Aurora, CO 80014-1678
www.mcrel.org

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
211 East Seventh Street (Second Floor)
Austin, Texas 78701-3281
www.sedl.org

University of Oregon, Eugene/ERIC
ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management
5207 University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97403-5207
http://eric.uoregon.edu/

III. Getting Focused and Building Coherency

In order to "get focused" and build coherency, stakeholders need to collect data from a variety of sources, develop profiles, research solutions to the challenges revealed through the profile, and form a coherent implementation plan that addresses those challenges. Stakeholders' success depends upon their participation in the relationships and the collaborative structures they establish, the training and knowledge they acquire through that process, and the faithfulness with which they apply their knowledge in shared decisionmaking. There is no shortcut to success. All components of school improvement are interrelated and interdependent.

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Checklist for Action

The following checklist is to be used as a guide, adapted as needed to your situation. Items listed here may not be sequential.

Actions	Checked
The district provides each school with **baseline data** for developing its school profile.	❑
Each school develops a **comprehensive school profile**, using aggregated and disaggregated data, to establish its own baseline data.	❑
Each school establishes a system of ongoing data collection and **regular profile updating**.	❑
Profile information on each school is **shared with stakeholders**.	❑
School profiles are used in the process of **identifying specific school goals** and developing an implementation plan for school improvement.	❑
As needed, staff members take **professional development** in: • profiling • aligning and mapping • use of data in developing an implementation plan • use of data in planning lessons and managing classrooms to meet student needs	 ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑
School staff members **complete the process of aligning and mapping** the curriculum, including but not limited to review of state and local standards and tests; individual as well as schoolwide mapping; extensive staff dialogue on the findings; and identification of points for revision, research, and development.	❑
In the development of their school's **coherent implementation plan**, school staff members demonstrate a **knowledge of "systems thinking."**	❑

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Checklist for Action

(continued)

Actions	Checked
Using the data gained from the school profile and aligning and mapping the curriculum, each school staff develops a comprehensive implementation plan for school improvement, engaging in a process that includes but is not necessarily limited to:	
• **A search** for effective, research-based means for achieving the goals and making recommendations to the school improvement leadership team	❑
• **Prioritizing** of the recommendations for changes, creating components of the plan	❑
• **Draft plan development**, using the recommendations for changes	❑
• **Presentation to the school community** at large to gain feedback and build support; inform school board and central office of school progress	❑
• **Plan revision** and finalization; disseminate plan to all stakeholders	❑
• **Implementation phase**, following timelines, monitoring progress, adjusting the plan as needed	❑
• **Renewal** process, including profile updating, development of guidelines for changes in leadership, mentoring new staff, gaining involvement of more stakeholders, improving relationships with support structures outside the school, and building up the components of a professional learning community	❑

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Case Studies

Excerpts from *Profiles of Progress: What Works in Northwest Title I Schools* (NWREL)

These are very brief examples of various concepts and practices that can be adapted to all grade levels.

Glacier Valley Elementary (Alaska)

First, [the principal] had the staff look at the facts before coming up with solutions. She disaggregated the achievement data by ethnicity, gender, language group, grade level, socioeconomic status, and special education. Once the staff saw the data, they realized the situation was not so hopeless. Although it was apparent that focused school improvement was necessary, the disaggregation showed that low-income students were not doing as poorly as has been thought.... These facts gave the staff a more positive attitude and made them wonder what they could do better. The data showed the school needed to take a comprehensive, systemwide, and sustainable approach to change, rather than the ad hoc approach it had been taking (p. 8).

Hoonah Elementary and High Schools (Alaska)

Culturally congruent curriculum and celebration of learning are two reasons for a successful learning environment. Another is aligning the curriculum to state and district standards, which has been a major factor in student improvement. In 1999, when the goal for curriculum alignment was set, the administration received unanimous agreement from the staff.... The strategies staff members use for successfully implementing curriculum alignment include documenting what standards are taught in weekly lesson plans, continuously reviewing test data, utilizing technology in planning and instructional delivery, and developing portfolio assessments for all grades.... Aligning the curriculum with standards, having a supportive administration that encourages staff involvement in planning, and creating a positive, culturally congruent learning community have been factors in increasing student achievement and performance (pp. 13–15).

Sacajawea Elementary (Idaho)

Targeted, standardized teaching using an aligned curriculum has been a major factor in reaching this goal [bringing students to grade level in reading].... Instruction and performance standards help ensure that the curriculum is aligned across and between grade levels. Reading, writing, and math plans have been established to make sure all staff are following the same guidelines.... Teachers use assessments to determine which students need individual reading plans (IRP) to help them in their learning.... Teachers work together in teams to develop the plans.... Teachers are seeing the effects of coordinated curriculum and collaboration. Says one teacher, "Before, we didn't have a system to fill in the gaps in kids' reading skills. One first-grade teacher might be teaching one way, while another did it a different way.... Now we are all using the same system...it's smoother for them" (pp. 16–17).

Portsmouth Middle School (Oregon)

"We had been looking at management approaches for several years," [the principal] notes, "trying to find a way to unify the various programs we had in place." What the Baldrige method identifies as "random acts of improvement" is exactly what [the principal] says happened at Portsmouth. "We had tried a lot of district programs, with varying success," he says, "but we had no unified vision. What we needed was a way to integrate those programs and to evaluate what was working and what wasn't" (pp. 26–27).

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Checklist for Creating and Using a School Profile

Following are actions that are essential to creating an effective school profile.

ACTIONS	Checked
Assemble available student data including achievement test scores, behavioral data, and attitudinal data to provide a profile of the entire school.	❑
Include student and community demographics data (poverty, ethnicity, English-language learners, and so forth) to show important characteristics of the student population.	❑
Display data graphically to show change over time, comparisons across student groups, comparisons to district or state averages, comparisons to benchmarks, or other important patterns in student achievement.	❑
Include test scores that show schoolwide results and data that show how different groups perform (disaggregated data) to address issues of equity and excellence.	❑
Write several narrative statements to describe important trends for each graphic profile display. Narrative statements should use everyday language and be descriptive rather than evaluative.	❑
Use the graphic profile and narrative statements to review student progress, establish priorities for improvement, and set specific academic goals and performance targets (e.g., improvement targets for one year and three years).	❑
Involve teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and middle school students in examining the data and setting improvement goals.	❑
Share the profile with all teachers, parents, community, and the school board to ensure that everyone works together to improve student performance.	❑
Update the school profile annually to monitor progress of the school improvement work. Include profiling as part of a data-driven, continuous improvement cycle.	❑

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Nine CSRD Components

(1) Effective, research-based methods and strategies:
A comprehensive school reform program employs innovative strategies and proven methods for student learning, teaching, and school management that are based on reliable research and effective practices, and have been replicated successfully in schools with diverse characteristics.

(2) Comprehensive design with aligned components:
The program has a comprehensive design for effective school functioning, including instruction, assessment, classroom management, professional development, parental involvement, and school management, that aligns the school's curriculum, technology, and professional development into a schoolwide reform plan designed to enable all students—including children from low-income families, children with limited English proficiency, and children with disabilities—to meet challenging state content and performance standards. The program addresses needs identified through a school needs assessment.

(3) Professional development:
The program provides high-quality and continuous teacher and staff professional development and training.

(4) Measurable goals and benchmarks:
A comprehensive school reform program has measurable goals for student performance tied to the state's challenging content and student performance standards, as those standards are implemented, and benchmarks for meeting the goals.

(5) Support within the school:
The program is supported by school faculty, administrators, and staff.

As stakeholders prepare for profiling, aligning and mapping, and development of their comprehensive implementation plan for school improvement, they may find these nine components of value. These components were identified in legislation supporting Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD), which is intended to raise student achievement by helping public schools implement successful comprehensive school reforms based on reliable research and effective practices.

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Nine CSRD Components (continued)

(6) Parental and community involvement:
The program provides for the meaningful involvement of parents and the local community in planning and implementing school improvement activities.

(7) External technical support and assistance:
A comprehensive reform program utilizes high-quality external support and assistance from a comprehensive school reform entity (which may be a university) with experience or expertise in schoolwide reform and improvement.

(8) Evaluation strategies:
The program includes a plan for the evaluation of the implementation of school reforms and the student results achieved.

(9) Coordination of resources:
The program identifies how other resources (federal, state, local, and private) available to the school will be utilized to coordinate services to support and sustain the school reform.

Source: NWREL *Catalog of School Reform Models*

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Indicators for School Readiness for Reform

Source: NWREL

The survey includes review of the following 11 elements of school readiness for reform:

(1) Recognition of Need

The faculty has a general understanding of the current school conditions and a sense of the need to improve student learning and the quality of the school environment. This awareness of the need for change may reflect internal and/or external dissatisfaction with the quality of the school and student learning. The faculty may not share specific information about the need, but there is nearly universal understanding that all is not right.

(2) Shared Concern

The school faculty share a concern for the quality of student learning as the primary focus of school improvement and the need for supportive, effective teaching to achieve improved student learning.

(3) Staff Collaboration

The school faculty desire to develop collaborative work habits. While much of the business of the school is conducted by staff members in isolation from each other, there is a general desire to develop stronger professional relationships among teams and schoolwide.

(4) Personal Commitment

With few exceptions, individuals are capable and ready to provide leadership, commit time and energy to reform, learn and pursue new ideas, and work collaboratively to achieve reform.

(5) Community Support

The community supports, expects, and desires improved student learning. There is support for the school faculty to achieve improved student learning.

(6) Strong Management Leadership

The principal and administrative team have a strong sense of support and leadership to move the school forward and to advocate for the school within the community. Community, business, and consultant partnerships are sought and maintained. There is a sense of

The School Readiness for Reform Survey was developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory to serve as a tool for schools in assessing their readiness for school improvement efforts. Such findings should be included as part of the school profile.

Contact

Matt Lewis at (503) 275-9591 or by e-mail at lewism@nwrel.org, to arrange for your school to use the survey. It is available on the Internet, but your school will need to receive a password from us to access the survey and to access your school report.

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Indicators for School Readiness for Reform (continued)

Source: NWREL

The survey includes review of the 11 elements of school readiness for reform:

willingness to allow risk taking in addressing the needs of students. Leadership is developed in the school to maintain consistency of commitments even with change in key leadership positions.

(7) Potential Curricular Leadership

There are natural leaders ready to provide direction and encouragement to others in the school who facilitate "getting started" and "keeping it going."

(8) Sense of Curriculum

The faculty has a strong sense of a comprehensive, aligned curriculum that guides classroom teaching. Teaching has moved beyond simple, concrete, factual instruction and learning to encourage critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

(9) High Expectations for All Students and Teachers

The teachers and school administration believe that all students can learn to high standards and that the role of teaching and school is to develop the appropriate learning environment to encourage all students to learn. There is a lack of reliance on the adage of high poverty leading to limited ability in students. Teachers are able and willing to develop and implement new teaching practices and establish effective learning environments in their classrooms.

(10) Strong Relationships

There is strong trust between and among the teachers, school administration, and the community of the school. Members of the school are encouraged to explore and share ideas and teaching strategies with their students. The faculty and community provide support for learning how to better address student needs.

(11) Inclusiveness

The faculty and school administration seek to include all constituent groups in planning and monitoring school change efforts. Such groups include parents, students, community members, and business partners.

Description

The School Readiness for Reform survey questions ask about several qualities of schools that are often areas of concern for faculties who are considering school reform and improvement efforts. The survey is intended to help school faculties develop shared understanding of these qualities in their respective schools. Respondents are asked, through the survey, to share their perspectives about their school with other faculty from their school. The results of the survey provide a place to start planning for specific school reform and improvement activities.

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Sample Indicators for School Readiness for Reform (continued)

This is a sample report of survey results presented for school planning teams to review and use to identify strengths and areas of need, and to begin planning possible actions to strengthen their school's readiness and support for reform.

County Junior-Senior High School (Number of Respondents = 25)

Recognition of need The faculty has a general understanding of the current school conditions and a sense of the need to improve student learning and the quality of the school environment. This awareness of the need for change may reflect internal and/or external dissatisfaction with the quality of the school and student learning. The faculty may not share specific information about the need, but there is nearly universal understanding that all is not right.	**Rating Scale:** **1=Strongly Disagree** **9=Strongly Agree** **Mean**	**Median**	**SD**
1. Teachers review state assessments of standards and benchmarks to understand how the results relate to classroom assessments and instruction.	6.8	7.0	1.2
2. I do not know how students in other classes are progressing in my school.	5.1	5.0	2.3
3. Teachers share concerns about the quality of teaching in my school.	7.6	7.0	0.9
4. Only a few teachers in my school know how well their students are doing on school district and state assessments.	4.0	4.0	2.4
5. The school faculty share a common understanding of what needs to change at my school to improve student learning.	6.3	5.0	1.9
6. The community shares an understanding of the strengths and needs of my school.	4.7	4.0	1.7
7. At times, it feels like I am the only one concerned for my students learning.	3.7	3.0	1.8
8. There are significant needs at my school that are not discussed openly.	3.7	2.0	2.8
9. The school committees in my school are focused on critical needs of the school.	6.3	7.0	2.1

I. What strengths of the school are shown in these data?

II. What needs are evident in these data?

III. What actions can be taken to improve the school's performance in this area?

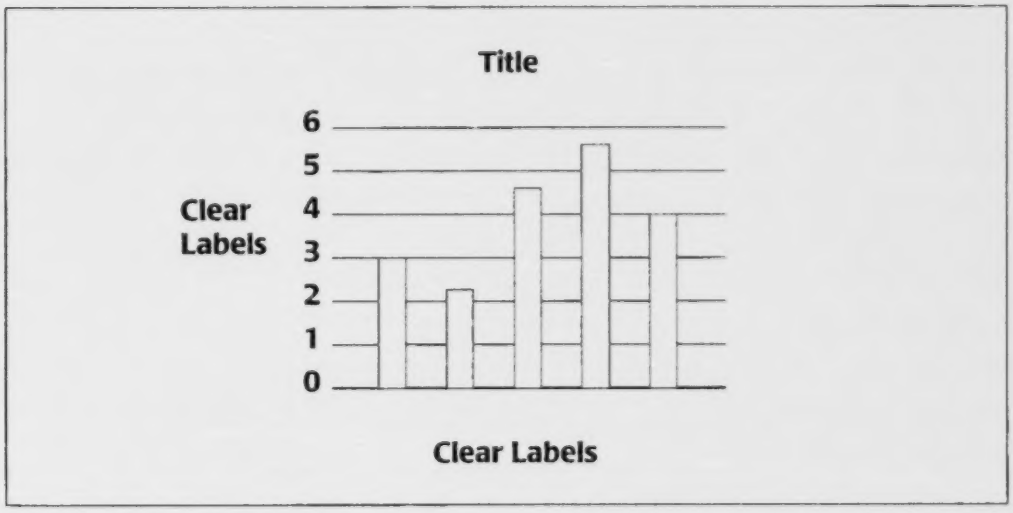
Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Profile Development Samples

Example from NWREL's Onward to Excellence II: *Creating the School Profile*

Data Displays

The graphic display should be titled. Each axis should be labeled clearly. Displays should:

- ❑ **Show average schoolwide performance**
- ❑ **Focus on patterns of student performance**
- ❑ **Include information about equity in learning among various groups of students in your district.** It is important to know how well students in various sub-groups are performing: boys and girls, high income and low income, students of various races and ethnic backgrounds. This will require disaggregating data.
- ❑ **Show multiyear trends (wherever possible).** Include information for the past several years (up to five) rather than just information about the immediate past year. Trends over time are most important for monitoring student performance.
- ❑ **Include comparison information on performance by groups other than the district, e.g., regional, state, or national performance.** This provides the basis for comparing school performance to performance of other comparable groups.



Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Profile Development Samples (continued)

Example from NWREL's Onward to Excellence II: *Creating the School Profile*

Narratives

Narrative statements are the link between basic student performance data and school improvement goals. Data analysis must be done in a way that results in narrative statements that represent the most important findings about student performance so that your improvement goals will be of importance to the school and the community. The narrative is a series of statements about the graph. The narrative should include no more than four statements about the graph and should:

- ❑ Focus on the **most important facts** in the data display
- ❑ Be written in **factual, non-evaluative** language
- ❑ Reflect a balance between **positive and negative** trends or findings
- ❑ Describe trends in performance **over time**.
- ❑ Describe high-performance and low-performance groups.
- ❑ Compare performance in your school with a **benchmark**, e.g., districtwide performance.
- ❑ Indicate the relationship of performance in your school to an **expectation or standard**.
- ❑ Communicate a **single idea** about student performance.
- ❑ Be written in short, clear sentences or phrases.

Examples of Profile Narratives:

- Between 1991 and 1994, the average NCE scores in language arts varied no more than two points, ranging from a high of 58 to a low of 56.
- In 1993–94, 67 percent of our students indicated a positive attitude about school.
- The percentage of students above the national norm in math increased from 53 percent in 1993 to 57 percent in 1994.
- The percentage of students in the outstanding category on our writing performance test remained stable between 1991 and 1993, with 10 percent of our students in this category.

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Profile Development Samples (continued)

Example from NWREL's Onward to Excellence II: *Creating the School Profile*

- ❑ Be descriptive rather than evaluative. A descriptive statement would be: "In 1993–94, 20 percent of our students were absent for 15 or more days." An evaluative statement would be: "In 1993–94, our students were absent for 15 or more days." Leave out evaluative words such as "good," "better," "poor," "significant," etc.

- ❑ Use everyday language that is easy to understand: Do not use education jargon.

- ❑ Be independent statements: Narratives should not be written in a way that requires the reader to refer to the data display for full understanding. Readers should understand the statement from the words alone.

- ❑ Should include numbers: "Fourth grades showed a gain of 14 percentile points from 1997 to 1998 in the area of mathematics," rather than: "Fourth grades showed positive gains from 1997 to 1998 in the area of mathematics."

More Examples of Profile Narratives:

- The average daily attendance in our school has been at least six percentage points lower than the district average daily attendance in each of the past three years.

- The percentage of students meeting the performance standard based on grades (all grades a 'C' or better) decreased from 65 percent in 1993 to 63 percent in 1994.

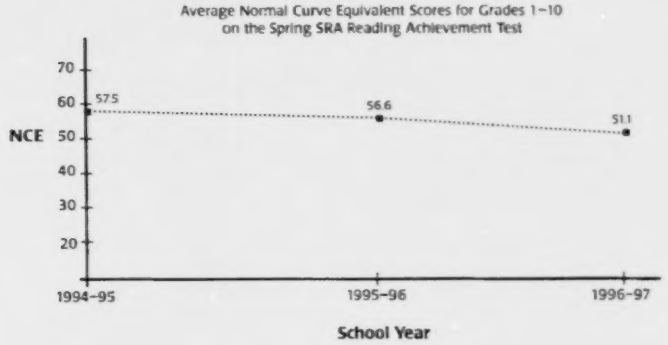
Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Profile Development Samples (continued)

Example from NWREL's Onward to Excellence II: *Creating the School Profile*

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
School Improvement Program

Example 1: Averages

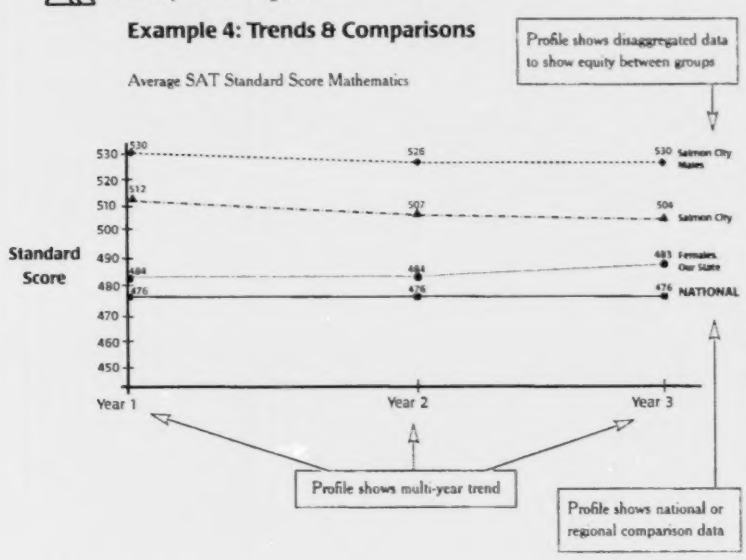
Prologue: The SRA Test is a standardized achievement test of basic skills. Total reading scores consist of two parts, vocabulary and comprehension. All students were tested during the month of April in 1995 and 1997



Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
School Improvement Program

Example 4: Trends & Comparisons

Average SAT Standard Score Mathematics



Sample Data Displays

These samples represent two of the user-friendly types of displays possible to develop for profiles.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Profile Development Samples (continued)

Example from NWREL's Onward to Excellence II: *Creating the School Profile*

ALIGNMENT AND MAPPING SAMPLES

Following are the layouts of some of the mapping tools used to determine what is/is not happening in the classroom. Because aligning and mapping curriculum is a complex task and requires experienced training and guidance, these samples are provided merely to assist in revealing some of what is entailed in the process. A completed sample of one type of map is provided for you in this document following these blank form samples.

Grade-Level Curriculum Map for _____ Grade

Creating Communities of Learning & Excellence

Goals	Beginning of Year	Middle of Year	End of Year
1. The student understands and applies concepts and procedures of *number*.			
2. The student understands/ applies concepts/procedures of *probability & measurements*.			
3. The student understands/ applies concepts/procedures of *probability & statistics*.			
4. The student understands/ applies concepts/procedures of *functions & relationships*.			
5. The student uses mathematics to *define and solve problems*.			

SAMPLE POSTER

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Profile Development Samples (continued)

Example from NWREL's Onward to Excellence II: *Creating the School Profile*

ALIGNMENT AND MAPPING SAMPLES

To complete the poster below, teachers work together in identifying the grade-level goals they have set to meet the identified standard, and then to record specific classwork and curricula they use to address each goal.

Grade-Level Curriculum Map

Creating Communities of Learning & Excellence

6.3 The student will read and learn the meanings of unfamiliar words.

- Use knowledge of word origins and derivations;
- Use word-reference materials.

Goals	Beginning of Year	Middle of Year	End of Year

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Profile Development Samples (continued)

Example from NWREL's Onward to Excellence II: *Creating the School Profile*

ALIGNMENT AND MAPPING SAMPLES

To complete the poster below, teachers work together to identify what students should know and be able to do in order to meet the standards and outcomes.

Worksheet: Reading Standards

Creating Communities of Learning & Excellence

Standard	Eligible Content (Outcome)	Students Should Know	Be Able To Do
1. The student will demonstrate literal understanding of passages taken from textual, functional, and recreational reading material.	Identify details that support main idea(s) in one or more passages.		
	Identify sequential order in one or more passages. (Sequential order may include dates; first, next, last; before and after; and order of events.		
	Identify directions that are implicit or embedded in a passage.		

Example from NWREL's Onward to Excellence II: Creating the School Profile

Aligning and Mapping Process—Sample OTE II Worksheet

Determining Critical & Common Schoolwide Student Learning Outcomes. Identify critical learning outcomes that students are actually experiencing to help them achieve the standard. Work with the most essential content, the most significant skills and processes, and the most revealing assessments. Do not discuss daily lesson plans; instead, maintain a schoolwide focus.

Goal Area _____

Grade Level(s) _____

Student Learning Outcomes

Most Important Content in Terms of Essential Concepts or Topics: ***What Students Should Know***	
Most Significant Skills & Processes: What Students ***Should Be Able To Do***	
Most Revealing Assessments: ***Key Products or Performances by Students***	

Getting Focused, Building Coherency—Profile Development Samples (continued)

Example from NWREL's Onward to Excellence II: *Creating the School Profile*

Sample Map Completed—Source: OTE II

Directions: Indicate the intended critical or core student learning outcomes over the course of the year. Do not list daily lesson plans or daily activities. Focus on the essential concepts/content students should know and the essential skills or processes they should be able to do. Adapted from Jacobs, 1997.

School Improvement Goal: Reading **Target: 80% of students at proficient level of reading**

	Start of Year	Mid Year	End of Year
Published standards in goal area (Source:)	Standards:	Standards:	Standards:
Content in terms of essential concepts (What students should know)	Reading: *Sarah Plain and Tall* Characteristics of historical fiction Character analysis Literature discussion Parts of a story Poetry: rhyme, imagery Reference books	Reading: *The Sign of the Beaver* Point of view Writing a book review Characteristics of realistic vs. historical fiction Poetry: personification, free verse Research	Reading: *Dear Mr. Henshaw* Author's purpose Characteristics of different literary genre Evaluation of literature Nonfiction: Fact vs. opinion
Processes and skills emphasized (What students should be able to do)	Use evidence from lit. to support interpretation Explain a character's importance to the story Identify parts of a story (setting, character, plot) Explain an image in a poem Skim and scan for info in an encyclopedia	Describe setting, character, plot, theme Identify author's point of view and describe its effect on the novel Critique book reviews for effectiveness Describe the effect of personification in a poem Use a thesaurus for improved word choice in writing	Critique a text with evidence for opinions Predict events/outcomes in a story Discuss author's purpose Compare news story and fiction dealing with same event/topic
Products or performances that are assessed (What students are tested on)	Literature discussions Comprehension checks Response journals Written character analysis Color poems, poetry recitation Encyclopedia task	Journal from a character's point of view Book review Literature discussions Comprehensive checks Sports, weather Personal vocabulary list	Book review (be the character) Verbal character analysis Literature discussions News show with feature story Original poem

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Research and Other Sources Supporting Data Analysis, Curriculum Alignment and Mapping

Bernhardt, V.L. (1999). *The School Portfolio: A Comprehensive Framework for School Improvement*, 2nd ed. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Bernhardt, V.L. (2000). *Data Analysis for Comprehensive School Improvement.* Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Carr, M.S. & Braunger, J. (1998). *Curriculum Inquiry Cycle: Improving Learning and Teaching—Making Decisions.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Cotton, K. (1999). *Research You Can Use to Improve Results.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Cotton, K. (1999). The Schooling Practices That Matter Most. *School Improvement Programs, Volume 11*, edited by Block, J.H., Everson, S.T., & Guskey, T.R. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

Jacobs, H.H. (1997). *Mapping the Big Picture: Integrating Curriculum and Assessment K–12.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Case Studies of What Works: Background for Implementation Planning

Railsback, J., Bracken, R., & Boss, S. (2001). *Profiles of Progress: What works in Northwest Title 1 schools.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Moving Forward Tool Box

IV. Finding Time for Adult Learning, Planning, and Collaborative Work—Supporting Professional Learning Communities.

Finding time outside of the classroom for adult activities is only the beginning, a first step. That time must then be used for the right kinds of adult work, contributing to the social and academic achievement of both adults and students. Following the guidelines for professional development that were observed in establishing effective shared decisionmaking structures, stakeholders need to take the next step in establishing and engaging in activities that improve professional practice within the framework of a professional learning community.

Finding Time—Checklist for Action

The following checklist is to be used as a guide, adapted as needed to your situation. Items listed here may not be sequential.

Action	Checked
Stakeholders agree to avoid quick fixes in meeting the challenges of school improvement.	❑
Stakeholders discuss the research and other evidence in support of professional learning communities. They demonstrate understanding of the components of effective learning communities.	❑
Stakeholders agree that the establishment and maintenance of professional learning communities is important to effective school improvement efforts.	❑
At both the district and school levels, stakeholders investigate and agree to options to make time for adult work during the work day, which includes the activities of professional learning communities: learning, planning, and collaboration.	❑
The school board and central office provide support for professional learning communities through • Policy • Funding • Other resources	 ❑ ❑ ❑
Central office personnel engage in and model the structures and activities of a professional learning community.	❑
In each school, key attributes of professional learning communities are evident to stakeholders: • Supportive and shared leadership • Collective learning and its application • Shared values and vision • Supportive conditions • Shared personal practice	 ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

Finding Time—Checklist for Action (continued)

The following checklist is to be used as a guide, adapted as needed to your situation. Items listed here may not be sequential.

Action	Checked
Each school includes the development and/or maintenance of a professional learning community in its implementation plan for school improvement.	❑
The process of professional development follows research-based guidelines.	❑
The content of professional development includes science-based research to the degree that such research is available. Staff members learn ways of reading and applying sound research in practice.	❑
Central office and school staff have extensive opportunities to engage in learning and interaction with allies from regional, state, and national coalitions, partnerships, and reform networks. Their learning is not confined to sources and resources within their own school or central office community.	❑

Finding Time—Case Studies

Excerpts from *Profiles of Progress: What Works in Northwest Title I Schools* (NWREL)

These are examples of various concepts and practices in roles and relationships that can be adapted to all grade levels. As always, consider the examples not in isolation, but in relation to all other examples, presented earlier in the Toolbox.

Glacier Valley Elementary (Alaska)

Parents, volunteers, paraeducators, and teachers meet in the teachers' lounge to eat, share, and work together... A major success in involving parents has been the Art Tuesday classes taught by parent volunteer every week.... Parents are not only welcomed as educators, they are empowered to act as professionals. The Art Tuesday classes also give teachers in the Collaborative Friends Groups (CFG) time to meet twice a month. CFG gives the staff an outlet to think about more productive teaching practices, examine curriculum and student work, and identify school culture issues that affect student achievement. This group is at the heart of developing the capacity of teachers to engage in reflective dialogue, give each other feedback, and hold each other accountable (pp. 9–10).

Sacajawea Elementary (Idaho)

Teachers work together in teams to develop [Individual Reading Plans for students]. For the first time, teachers are able to see the results of the assessments and to use that information to tailor their teaching to meet the students' needs. Having teachers directly involved in giving assessments, looking at the results, and using the results to develop plans for instruction has not only given teachers the tools and leadership to make curriculum decisions, but has also encouraged teachers to work together toward a common, focused goal. [The principal] has given teachers time each week to meet with other teachers at their grade level. They share strategies and stories, and work together to help struggling students. Providing sustained professional development has really made a difference (pp. 17–18).

Taft Elementary (Idaho)

A new paradigm of professional development is critical in the process of becoming a learning community. Training must support the school/district's long-term plan, include a needs assessment process, utilize different models to meet the needs of all staff members, and be embedded and ongoing. Staff members have attended numerous conferences and workshops on topics such as responding to diversity, results-driven school improvement, using assessment, and building effective learning communities.... More than 80 percent of the staff [received] training...by October 2001. Teachers will continue to be encouraged to observe in each other's classrooms as the staff moves toward a collegial coaching model for instructional improvement. Opportunities to read and share current literature and best practices will be provided through a monthly "Breakfast Club" (pp. 2–22).

Finding Time—Case Studies (continued)

Excerpts from *Profiles of Progress: What Works in Northwest Title I Schools* (NWREL)

These are examples of various concepts and practices in roles and relationships that can be adapted to all grade levels. As always, consider the examples not in isolation, but in relation to all other examples, presented earlier in the Toolbox.

Larson Heights Elementary (Washington)

At Larson Heights, it's not just the main staff that receives extensive training. As [the principal] notes, "We don't call our assistants 'paraprofessionals' here, because we really consider them to be fully professional teachers...." To that end, there is inservice training once a month, specifically for the educational assistants.This emphasis on professional development is one of the keys to Larson Heights' success. By bringing in substitutes, and by meeting with two grade levels for assembly-style presentations on most Friday afternoons, [the principal] frees up the staff of each grade level for a half-day a month. While staff are involved in grade-level planning, development, and training, the principal reviews important topics, brings in guest speakers from the community, and coordinates follow-up activities for students (pp. 45–46).

Corlett Elementary (Wyoming)

By arranging to have teaching specialists for art, music, and P.E. all come in the afternoon...taking greater advantage of the educational assistants, and moving to block scheduling, [the principal] was able to [allow] each grade level team 30 minutes of planning time every day...[and] set aside 40 minutes of reading time every day with a class size of only seven (pp. 54–55).

Afton Elementary (Wyoming)

There are also inservice times scheduled for late-start each month for two hours, two full days before school starts, and two additional days during the year. In addition, each teacher in grades 1-6 has 40 minutes a day of preparation time while students are in music, library, and/or P.E. (p. 50).

Finding Time—Some Ideas for Finding Time for Adult Work

Summarized from *Creating Time for Professional Learning Teams* (NWREL, in draft)

The following are provided only as a means of raising awareness of options. The success of these methods depends upon considerable planning, learning, and discussion before their implementation.

Planned Abandonment of:

❑ Teacher duty periods, to allow the time for team-based professional development

❑ Traditional inservice days, by redistributing that time into shorter but more regular meetings

❑ Faculty meetings that are often used for administrative duties that can be handled by email, memo, paper announcements, or similar methods

❑ Activities that do not directly contribute to student achievement or staff professional learning, and whose funds can be used for substitutes or extended contract hours for professional learning teams

Extended Lunch

❑ In schools with a single common lunch for all students, time for staff team meetings can be created by extending the lunch once every week or every other week. Parent volunteers or substitutes can supervise students

Flex Time

❑ Teachers may arrive at school at different times, with adjustments to their departure times, to create a longer block of time either before or after school for team meetings

Hiring Substitute Teachers or Administrative Substitutes

❑ Teams of teachers can be released during the workday for meetings, using a regular team of substitutes to help ensure continuity in the classrooms. Administrators might serve as substitutes for some of the teachers, allowing these administrators opportunities to get to know the students in a different context and to showcase curricular and instructional strategies

Early Dismissal or Late Arrival for Students

❑ Regularly lengthen some school days in the week to allow more time on other days for teams to meet

❑ Use time during some school days for students to engage in service learning, or offer school-to-work internships to students

Special Studies Day or Time

❑ Create a block or blocks of time throughout a week for all the students of one team of teachers to meet with specialists in the building, freeing that team to work together without interruption

Four-Day Student Week

❑ Lengthen each school day to maintain student-teacher contact time and to enable staff to have one full day a week to meet in teams

Block and Modified Block Schedules

❑ Block schedules provide longer periods of time both for in-depth student learning and for adult learning and work, when teachers adopt and use instructional strategies suited for longer classes

Finding Time—The Lesson Study Process

Following is an example of one strategy used within the context of a professional learning community that can help improve student achievement.

(1) Focusing the Lesson

The lesson study usually focuses on a broad, schoolwide goal such as "independent thinking" or "love of learning." The teachers help determine these broad goals, and they choose the specific topic of the lesson. The topic often comes from a problematic concept that the teachers have observed in their own classrooms.

(2) Planning the Lesson

The teachers research the topic of the study, reading books and articles about the problem they are working on. They collaborate to develop the lesson plan, and a draft is presented to the school staff for feedback.

(3) Teaching the Lesson

One teacher from the team presents the lesson in his classroom. The other teachers observe the lesson very closely, taking notes on what the students and the teacher are doing and saying. The lesson may be documented through video, photographs, audiotapes, and student work.

(4) Reflecting and Evaluating

The group meets after school to discuss the lesson and their observations. The teacher who presented the lesson speaks first, outlining how he thinks the lesson went and identifying problems he observed. The other teachers contribute their own observations and suggestions.

(5) Revising the Lesson

Based on the problems identified in the first presentation, the study group makes changes in the lesson. Changes are usually based on student misunderstandings that the teachers noticed during their observation. The group may meet several times to improve the lesson and prepare for a second implementation, although sometimes the teachers decide that they do not need to reteach it.

To the left and on the next page is an overview of "lesson study" or "research lessons." It is an effective strategy for improving classroom instruction. In Japanese schools, the lesson study process generally flows through the phases outlined to the left. The amount of time devoted to each lesson study varies, but the teachers commonly work on a lesson for about one month.

This overview of the lesson study process is based on the work of Lewis (2000), Stigler & Hiebert (1999), and Yoshida (1999).

Finding Time—The Lesson Study Process (continued)

(6) Teaching the Revised Lesson

The lesson may be presented again to a different group of students. The same person may teach the lesson a second time or a different teacher may try it out. Often, all the teachers in the school are invited to observe the revised lesson.

(7) Reflecting and Evaluating

The whole faculty will participate in the second debriefing session, which may cover more general issues of learning and instruction. There is usually an outside expert working with the lesson study group, who speaks last during the debriefing.

(8) Sharing results

Teachers share the lessons they develop through this process, creating a bank of meticulously crafted lessons to draw upon. The teachers will often publish a report about their study, including the teachers' reflections and a summary of group discussions. In addition, teachers from outside the school may be invited to observe the teachers present the lesson.

Source: Northwest Teacher Magazine, Spring 2001, at www.nwrel.org/nsec/nwteacher/spring2001/lessonprocess.html

Finding Time—Links to Lesson Study

The Lesson Study Research Group at Teachers College/Columbia University in New York

Examines how lesson study is practiced in Japan, the effect of American and Japanese teachers' practice of lesson study on teaching and learning, and the tools needed to support this activity. From the home page, lesson study field application sites can be accessed, allowing viewers to read about the progress of lesson study activities at schools around the country. (www.tc.edu/centers/lessonstudy/)

Mills College Education Department in Oakland, California

Hosts a Japan-United States Elementary Education Research Project funded by the NSF which looks at lesson study. The project as a Web site (lessonresearch.net) featuring publications on lesson study, video clips of lesson study from Japanese classrooms, descriptions of lesson study videotapes that can be ordered, as well as news of events and funding opportunities related to lesson study. Links to additional resources and further professional development around the issue of lesson study are also available.

James Stigler

Coauthor of The Teaching Gap, has set out to develop Web-based software that will support teacher lesson study groups by providing a means for creating databases; placing entire classroom lessons online; and structuring electronic communities for facilitating collaborations, sharing information, and disseminating lesson study results and curriculum. Stigler directed the videotape study component of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). His company, LessonLab Inc. of Los Angeles (www.lessonlab.com/), examines the applications of multimedia technologies to large-scale research into teaching.

Some leading U.S. researchers have created Web sites to share their accumulating knowledge about lesson study: how lesson study can be implemented in this country, which schools and districts are trying this approach, what educators and researchers have to say about it, and where to find further resources.

Finding Time—Links to Lesson Study (continued)

The Mid-Atlantic Eisenhower Consortium for Mathematics and Science Education @ Research for Better Schools in Philadelphia

Hosts the TIMSS Resource Center (www.rbs.org/ec.nsf/pages/L2TIMSS). This site provides links to TIMSS-related resources, a lesson study Web site (www.rbs.org/ec.nsf/pages/LessonStudy), and the Journey Beyond TIMSS brochure, which provides information linking TIMSS results and the importance of professional development grounded in the practice of lesson study (www.rbs.org/ec.nsf/pages/JourneyBeyondTIMSS). The Journey Beyond TIMSS Web site presents an easily understood outline of the components of lesson study, as well as the characteristics of teachers who have a deep understanding of mathematics as revealed through Liping Ma's book, Knowing and Teaching Elementary Mathematics: Teachers' Understanding of Fundamental Mathematics in China and the United States (Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc., 1999).

To find out more

about how lesson study is being implemented at some of the schools and districts featured in this issue of the journal, visit their Web sites:

❑ Bellevue School District, Bellevue, Washington (belnet.bellevue.k12.wa.us/lessonstudy.html)

❑ Nashville, Tennessee (www.nashville.k12.tn.us)

❑ State of Delaware
www.doe.state.de.us/englangarts/lstudy.htm
www.doe.state.de.us/Lessonstudy.htm

Source: Eric Blackford is a math and science associate for the Northwest Eisenhower Consortium at NWREL

Finding Time–Structured Reflection Protocol

The Structured Reflection Protocol is another example of an effective collaborative strategy that educators can use to improve student achievement.

How Structured Reflection Protocol Process Works

Preparing: Adult or student participants who will discuss the student work form an analysis team (two–six people). The analysis team develops a focusing question to guide their discussion. If a group is examining student writing, for instance, a focusing question might be: "Are students able to make effective transitions in their writing?" With the focusing question in mind, each team member gathers the student work he or she will analyze with the group.

Analyzing: The analysis team now conducts a discussion in front of a group of listeners who form the feedback team. The analysis team provides an overview of the assignments that students completed, and discusses how this work informs the focusing question and how instructional experiences affected student learning in this area. The analysis team's discussion is held to a predetermined time limit of 15–20 minutes. Giving Feedback: When the analysis team has completed its discussion, the feedback team presents highlights of the analysis discussion and notes any issues that may still need further discussion. Feedback teams are also allotted a limited time.

Reflecting: The analysis team is given an opportunity to discuss what it heard from the feedback team, along with new insights or next steps.

Debriefing: The final step in the process is a short debriefing for the whole group. The entire SRP process can be done in 35 to 50 minutes. The process may be repeated periodically, with different collections of student work each time to address a different question. Since students' work is the basis for the dialogue in the Structured Reflection Protocol, student perspectives are also taken into account.

Source: This document's URL is:
http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/scc/studentvoices/srp.shtml

Structured Reflection Protocol (SRP) is a time-efficient group dialogue process. It may be used by either students or staff to explore indepth what helps students to learn and improve their work. During the protocol, participants analyze student work, using it as a starting point to promote self-study, reflection, and strategies for improvement.

Finding Time—Resources

Small Learning Communities

Cotton, K. (2001). New small learning communities: Findings from recent literature. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Examples and Recommendations for Time Creation

Jensen, J. (forthcoming). Creating time for professional learning teams. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

National Education Commission on Time and Learning (1994). Prisoners of time: Report of the National Educational Education Commission on Time and Learning. Washington, DC: Author.

Moving Forward Tool Box

IV. Growing Leaders

All the material previously presented is relevant to this subject as well. Leaders need to personify lifelong learning. They need to know the standards and requirements for their work and roles, and they need to engage in dialogue about process and content with their peers and others. They must know the Big Picture and the Details.

Growing Leaders—Checklist for Action

The following checklist is to be used as a guide, adapted as needed to your situation. Items listed here may not be sequential.

Actions	Checked
Stakeholders familiarize themselves with the research and agree on the **benefits of lifelong learning** for everyone.	❑
Stakeholders familiarize themselves with the **standards, knowledge, and skills** necessary to effective primary and secondary levels of leadership in schools where students achieve at high levels, as well as the varieties of leadership styles and their effects.	❑
Training, resources, and support are provided for parents/guardians to help them access their children's school productively and to build constructive relationships with educators.	❑
Administrators and teachers in leadership positions are provided with: • **ongoing professional development** and • **regular time for professional interactions**.	 ❑ ❑
The school board and central office personnel adopt **policies, funding, and the allocation of resources** for developing the capacities of their leaders and potential leaders.	❑
Schools and central office have a system of supports in place to **identify leadership needs** and to **address those needs** in a timely manner, and to assist principals and other leaders in building their leadership skills.	❑
School principals demonstrate **characteristics common to principals of effective schools,** as reflected in research, including but not limited to: • Inclusive, facilitative orientation • Institutional focus on student learning • Efficient management • Combined pressure and support • Strategic orientation, using school improvement plans and instructional focus to "attack incoherence"	 ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

Growing Leaders—Checklist for Action *(continued)*

The following checklist is to be used as a guide, adapted as needed to your situation. Items listed here may not be sequential.

Actions	Checked
Primary and secondary leadership in the central office and schools engage in **distributed leadership** structures.	❑
The district has established structures for **supportive companionship** in the processes of professional growth for its leaders.	❑
At both the central office and school levels, there is an emphasis on "**nurturing and celebrating the work of each staff person** and of supporting the engagement of staff in such activities as shared vision development, problem identification, learning, and problem resolution."	❑
The **superintendent engages in research-based practices** that are characteristic of superintendents of effective districts, including but not limited to	
• Training and development of all staff	❑
• Acting directly as a role model and teacher for principals	❑
• Linking principals' growth to school needs	❑
• Allocating resources to principals for their own and their staffs' professional growth	❑
• Monitoring school progress by spending major time in schools and classrooms	❑
• Supplying technical and on-site assistance to support site administrators	❑
• Being readily accessible to principals	❑
Leaders and other stakeholders maintain a system for identifying and then providing the **resources and tools** needed for leaders and others involved in school change to work toward the **achievement of excellence**.	❑
Primary and secondary leaders in the district at both central office and school levels demonstrate efforts to **model the behaviors** and values that society wishes its children to learn.	❑

Growing Leaders—Case Studies

Excerpts from *Profiles of Progress: What Works in Northwest Title I Schools* (NWREL)

These are examples of various concepts and practices in roles and relationships that can be adapted to all grade levels. As before, consider this information in light of the other information provided in Moving Forward.

Taft Elementary (Idaho)

District-level support is a necessary component for implementing change at the building level. Says [the principal], "District-level support is crucial to the success of the school improvement process. Requiring accountability without addressing other issues such as equity, teacher/student ratios, and continuous professional development will result in 'just another reform effort'. I have been very fortunate to work with a group of district level administrators, board members, and community members who have developed a road map for excellence through our strategic planning process" (p. 22).

Afton Elementary (Wyoming)

The importance that Afton places on research and new ideas is also reflected in the many conferences school staff members have attended. Teacher/staff teams frequently go as small groups to see other schools in the state, as well as to conferences.... They also attend technology inservice sessions on a regular basis. [The principal] also draws attention to both the state and district support of the school's coordination of funds. Afton takes the idea of reallocation of resources "to the limit," by combining Title I, special education, district, and school site funds in a variety of ways, to support everything from instructional programs, to professional development, to books and other materials. The unofficial motto, "Comfort the Disturbed, Disturb the Comfortable," gives some indication of the independent spirit that drives the school reform process (pp. 51–52).

Pablo School (Montana)

Making sure the staff was 100 percent involved in training in the model was critical and necessary. All staff members (including speech pathologists, the school nurse, counselors, paraeducators, and teacher specialists) were involved in the initial model training.... Says [the principal], "We found that professional development is more effective when a strategy is taught, reviewed, enhanced, and revisited. If we only just 'teach' the strategy, effective implementation is not systemic." Systemic professional development creates and supports ownership (p. 37).

Glacier Valley Elementary (Alaska)

Certainly the road has not always been easy. The staff members indicated in a survey that they wished they had more time-time for training on model strategies; time for assessment development, and for collaboration to do so; time to process what they've learned; time to get everything done. Overall, however, the staff remains supportive of the process. They emphasize the principal's strong leadership and commitment to staff development has made the difference. Said one respondent in the survey, "We have a very supportive principal who mentors, encourages, and models new educational processes."... The staff's dedication carries over to the well-being of students. A visitor asked two students working together in the hallway what they liked best about their school. One girl said, "You know the teachers really support you here. They are like family." The other girl replied, "No, they are family" (p. 11).

Growing Leaders–
NSDC's Learning To Lead, Leading To Learn

Improving School Quality through Principal Professional Development

Excerpts and title from the publication by The National Staff Development Council
Reprinted with permission of the National Staff Development Council, 2002. All rights reserved.

Responsibilities for school systems "serious about standards-based student learning and the quality of teaching"
–Ensure that all principals:

❑ Are members of ongoing study groups that delve deeply into the most important instructional issues in their schools

❑ Regularly visit one another's schools to learn about outstanding practice, critique colleague's improvement efforts, and support one another in improving instruction

❑ Receive frequent in-school coaching on critical skill areas such as working with teachers to improve instruction, analyzing data, and critiquing student work

Recommendations for Schools, Networks, and Districts:

❑ Encourage principals to distribute leadership in their schools

❑ Improve the selection and continuous learning of principals

❑ Create apprenticeship programs for principals

❑ Establish support networks for school leaders

❑ Provide coaches for principals

❑ Require a focus on instruction

❑ Build grow-your-own principal programs on the local level

❑ Make time for professional development

❑ Increase incentives that encourage teacher leadership

Growing Leaders—
NSDC's Learning to Lead, Leading to Learn (continued)
Examples From the Field

Four Components of Professional Development for Leaders from Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, Kentucky

(1) Institute learning that includes both principals and teachers

The three-day summer institute brings together middle school principals and the teacher leadership team from their schools to focus on standards for a particular academic area. During the institute, principals and teachers examine data that show how their schools measure up against those standards, and work together to develop a school improvement plan and a year-long professional development plan for their own buildings.

(2) Regular staff development days for principals that focus on a single area of instruction

To ensure that this time is focused on professional development, leaders of the program meet in advance with a small group of principals to determine what should be addressed with the group and what can be covered in memos. During the last two years, sessions have focused on improving student writing. Principals have met with the district's writing specialist to review writing standards, understand the state's writing assessment, compare student work to the standards, and understand what classrooms should look like if students are writing to high standards. In 13 of the district's 24 middle schools, students improved their writing scores.

(3) A cohort strand in which principals learn with other principals who share a common interest

During afternoon sessions, the 24 middle school principals are divided, according to their interests, into five groups (integrating technology into instruction; developing leadership skills; and three groups on learning more about "knowledge work"). The cohort groups were determined by a self-assessment the principals designed themselves focused on what they believed were the 20 most important indicators for high-performing schools and areas in which they needed to learn the most. Each group has a coach, a former middle school principal with expertise in the area studied, who guides its work and stays with it over time.

Growing Leaders—
NSDC's Learning to Lead, Leading to Learn (continued)
Examples From the Field

(4) Individual professional development plans and a peer evaluation program

Each middle school evaluation team is selected from the principal's cohort group. Three principals from the cohort are selected to serve on each evaluation team. Each principal creates an individual professional development plan. Then, each year, one of the three principals in the group has a summative evaluation. During mid-year, the three principals meet at that principal's school for at least 90 minutes to talk about that principal's growth. Principals can demonstrate what they've done by providing artifacts, creating a portfolio, doing a walk-through of their buildings-whatever they believe is relevant to their professional development plan. The administrator signs off on the evaluation, as do the other principals in the cohort group.

Four Components of Professional Development for Leaders from Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, Kentucky

Growing Leaders—
NSDC's Learning to Lead, Leading to Learn (continued)
Teachers as Leaders

Of course, even the best principals cannot single-handedly transform a school.

To create a culture that promotes what Elmore calls "distributed leadership," principals must assist teachers in becoming leaders in their schools. Teachers need opportunities to serve on governance committees, mentor less experienced staff, coach peers, and support colleagues who want to seek certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. In some cases, the principal can transfer some of his or her administrative power to faculty committees, exchanging authority for the greater accomplishments of teamwork. Studies of schools in the Midwest found that "teachers appear substantially more willing to participate in all areas of decisionmaking if they perceive their relationships with their principals as more open, collaborative, facilitative, and supportive" (Smylie, 1992, p. 63).

Teachers can also lead their peers through participation in lesson study, where a group of teachers collectively develop and test the lessons that each will use individually, and by working with principals to develop school improvement plans and professional development programs. Experienced teacher leaders can both formally and informally share their skills with new teachers and discuss ways the whole school can be improved. They also can participate in action research that continuously improves classroom and schoolwide practice.

To achieve these ends, professional development for teacher leadership must go beyond training teachers in content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Our vision of effective professional development for teachers and school leaders calls for a daily, job-embedded, team learning approach that focuses on planning lessons, critiquing student work, and group problem solving.

Smylie, Mark A. (1992). Teacher participation in school decision making: Assessing willingness to participate. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis 14 (1).

Growing Leaders—
NSDC's Learning to Lead, Leading to Learn (continued)
Recommendations for Schools, Networks, and Districts

❑ Encourage principals to distribute leadership in their schools.

❑ Improve the selection and continuous learning of principals.

❑ Create apprenticeship programs for principals.

❑ Establish support networks for school leaders.

❑ Provide coaches for principals.

❑ Require a focus on instruction.

❑ Build grow-your-own principal programs on the local level.

❑ Make time for professional development

Note: NSDC recommends the establishment of career ladders that have "rungs for teacher leaders," and the allocation of 10 percent of school budgets to ensure professional development for teachers, principals, and administrators. NSDC also recommends the requirement that principals create leadership teams with "real power," as well as rewards for teachers who achieve national certification.

❑ Increase incentives that encourage teacher leadership.

Source: NSDC at www.nsdc.org/leader_report.html

Growing Leaders–Key Work of School Boards

In *The Key Work of School Boards Guidebook*, published by the National School Boards Association (www.nsba.org/keywork), eight key actions of school boards are identified:

(1) Vision
(2) Standards
(3) Assessment
(4) Accountability
(5) Alignment
(6) Learning environment
(7) Collaborative partnerships
(8) Continuous improvement

NSBA's guidebook takes a systems approach and provides tools for taking action, including self-assessment tools, and recommendations for board actions, public engagement strategies, effective school district practices, and contact information for districts noted in the text.

These eight actions are significant to school boards' support for schools engaged in school improvement efforts.

Growing Leaders—Resources

American Federation of Teachers
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-879-4400
www.aft.org

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
1703 North Beauregard Street
Alexandria, VA 22311-1414
1-800-933-2723
703-578-9600
www.ascd.org

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
555 Middlefield Road
Menlo Park, CA 94025
650-566-5110
www.carnegiefoundation.org

Council for Basic Education
1319 F Street, NW, Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20004-1152
202-247-4171
www.c-b-e.org

Education Commission of the States/Education Issues: Teaching Quality
700 Broadway #1200
Denver, CO 80203
303-299-3600
www.ecs.org

Institute for Educational Leadership
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 310
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-822-8405
www.iel.org

Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC)
Council of Chief State School Officers
One Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-408-5505
www.ccsso.org/intasc

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)
2550 South Parker Road, Suite 500
Aurora, CO 80014-1678
www.mcrel.org

National Association of Elementary School Principals
1615 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
1-800-386-2377
www.naesp.org

National Association of Secondary School Principals
1904 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191
703-860-0200
www.nassp.org

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
1525 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22209
703-465-2700
www.nbpts.org

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF)
Teachers College, Columbia University
525 West 120th Street, Box 117
New York, NY 10027
212-678-4153
www.nctaf.org

National Education Association
1201 16th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-833-4000
www.nea.org

National School Boards Association
1680 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 223114-3493
703-838-6722
www.nsba.org

National Staff Development Council
PO Box 240
Oxford, OH 45056
513-523-6029
www.nsdc.org

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL)
1120 East Diehl Road, Suite 200
Naperville, IL 60563
www.ncrel.org

A Closing Thought To Hold During the Struggles of Change...

From the advice of Merlyn to young Arthur, during his early efforts to realize ideals

"The best thing for being sad," replied Merlyn, beginning to puff and blow, "is to learn something. That is the only thing that never fails.

You may grow old and trembling in your anatomies, you may lie awake at night listening to the disorder of your veins, you may miss your only love, you may see the world about you devastated by evil lunatics, or know your honor trampled in the sewers of baser minds. There is only one thing for it then—to learn."

—T.E. White

More About NWREL

Mission

The mission of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) is to improve educational results for children, youth, and adults by providing research and development assistance in delivering equitable, high quality educational programs. A private, nonprofit corporation, NWREL provides research and development assistance to education, government, community agencies, business, and labor. NWREL is part of a national network of 10 educational laboratories funded by the U.S. Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) to serve the Northwest region of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Now in its fourth decade, NWREL reaffirms the belief that strong public schools, strong communities, strong families, and strong children make a strong nation. We further believe that every student must have equal access to high quality education and the opportunity to succeed, and that strong schools ensure equity and excellence for all students.

Priorities for Educational Improvement

Focusing on priority educational needs in the region, NWREL conducts 11 programs in research and development and training and technical assistance.

Information and Resources

Numerous resources for educators, policymakers, parents, and the public are made available by NWREL. These resources include events, such as conferences, workshops, and other activities; and products and publications, such as the Laboratory magazine and newsletters.

Services From Expert Staff

Our staff of more than 200 includes professional employees with doctorates from leading universities. Graduate majors include education, mathematics, science, business, languages, human development, journalism, law, library science, and foreign studies, among others. Information about current openings is available from the human resources office.

Creating Communities of Learning & Excellence

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

101 S.W. Main Street
Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204

Telephone: (503) 275-9500
Fax: (503) 275-0458
E-mail: info@nwrel.org
Web Site: www.nwrel.org

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT (OERI)

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

REPRODUCTION RELEASE (Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION

Title: MOVING FORWARD...FROM WHERE YOU ARE TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT THAT LASTS: A RESEARCH-BASED GUIDE

Author(s): Deanna Woods

Corporate Source (if appropriate): Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Publication Date: 2/02

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Resources in Education (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche and paper copy (or microfiche only) and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the options and sign the release below.

CHECK HERE ➧ [XX] Microfiche (4" x 6" film) and paper copy (8½" x 11") reproduction

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

OR [ ] Microfiche (4" x 6" film) reproduction only

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

[PERSONAL NAME OR ORGANIZATION AS APPROPRIATE]

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but neither box is checked, documents will be processed in both microfiche and paper copy.

"I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction of microfiche by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries."

SIGN HERE ➧

Signature: Dave Wilson HA Printed Name: Dave Wilson

Organization: Director, Development and Communications, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory Position: XXXXX

Address: 101 SW Main Street, Suite 500 Tel. No.: (503) 275-9517

Portland, OR Zip Code: 97204-3297 Date: 3/29/02

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (Non-ERIC Source)

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents which cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:

Address:

Price Per Copy: Quantity Price:

IV. REFERRAL TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER

If the right to grant reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

EFF-53 (Rev. 4/86)